

WILLIAM F. WILLOUGHBY
A PROGRESSIVE IN CHINA, 1914-1916

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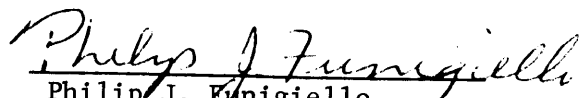

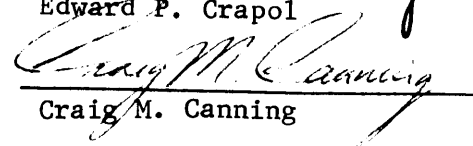

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ABSTRACT

In September, 1914, William F. Willoughby arrived in Peking to serve as legal adviser to Yuan Shih-k'ai, President of the Republic of China. He brought to his work in China extensive experience in government reorganization. While serving as treasurer of the Council of Puerto Rico, a member of the Taft Commission on Economy and Efficiency in Government, and as assistant director of the Census Bureau, he had won significant acclaim for his efforts to introduce the techniques of scientific management to public administration. This thesis is the result of an investigation and evaluation of Willoughby's eighteen-month tenure as adviser.

Like American Minister Paul Reinsch and President Woodrow Wilson, Willoughby believed that no progress toward true republican government could be made in China without the existence of a stable government. Consequently, he proposed significant changes in China's taxation and civil service systems and urged Yuan Shih-k'ai to establish close political and financial ties with the United States. The existence of a strong government and close ties with the United States not only enhanced the prospects for eventual republican government but allowed China to become a "fair field" for American economic, political, and social influence.

A study of Willoughby's memoranda and correspondence thus reveals that he was typical of the progressives who wished to influence China's development and that his proposals for reform were entirely consistent with the Open Door policy. Had Yuan Shih-k'ai sincerely desired the establishment of republican government, Willoughby's plans might have influenced China's development. Instead, Yuan attempted to restore imperial rule in China. Moreover, Willoughby's proposals were inconsistent with China's ancient Confucian scholar tradition and required wholesale adoption of western values. In short, Willoughby had little direct influence on either American Far Eastern policy or on China's development. His failure to export progressive reforms to China reminds us that America's ability to determine the development of other nations is limited and that a nation's political institutions must reflect its own history and culture.

WILLIAM F. WILLOUGHBY

A PROGRESSIVE IN CHINA, 1914-1916

INTRODUCTION

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, entrepreneurs, educators, diplomats, missionaries, engineers, and social workers travelled to China to exploit new markets and to "awake the sleeping Chinese" to western social, political, and economic ideas. Although it may appear at first glance that the interests of these travellers conflicted, such was not the case, for they all espoused mutually interdependent goals. The social or political reformers who wished to develop a modern republic in China knew that political and social progress depended upon the development of an economy which could provide a decent standard of living for China's people. The entrepreneurs who promoted economic development needed a stable government with a modern administrative system to protect their financial interests. Both the entrepreneurs and the reformers found friends among the diplomats, for a stable government was sorely needed in China to maintain the policy of the Open Door.

Among the Americans who travelled to China to promote her social, economic, and political progress was William Franklin Willoughby, deputy legal adviser to the President of the Republic of China, Yuan Shih-k'ai. Prior to his appointment as legal adviser, Willoughby had served as a

member of the Taft Commission on Economy and Efficiency in Government, treasurer and then secretary of the Council of Puerto Rico, and assistant director of the Census Bureau. He had won considerable acclaim for his efforts to secure labor reform and introduce the techniques of scientific management to public administration.

His work in Peking from 1914 to 1916 provides a striking example of the convergence of the goals of the entrepreneur, the reformer, and the diplomat. Because he admired the political systems of Great Britain and the United States, he wanted very much to have China adopt a western model for her political development. He strongly believed that close diplomatic relations with the United States and successful American investments in China could encourage her development along western lines. In diplomacy, reform, and investment, Willoughby saw the tools to build a stable China, a country capable of resisting Japanese military and commercial encroachments while maintaining an open door to influence from the United States.

The William F. Willoughby Papers in the Earl Gregg Swem Library of the College of William and Mary contain significant information about Willoughby's service as deputy legal adviser, including letters to his twin brother Westel and fifteen memoranda submitted to Yuan Shih-k'ai. These sources indicate that Willoughby was in many respects typical of the progressives who saw China as a new western

frontier to which Americans could export political, social, and economic ideas and institutions.

Willoughby was, however, only one of several advisers to President Yuan Shih-k'ai, and Yuan's motives in seeking foreign advice were questionable. To evaluate Willoughby's term as an adviser, one must ask what he knew of China's political traditions, what effect his progressive orientation had upon his advice, and whether his advice was realistic and valuable to the Chinese. In short, this thesis should measure the impact of Willoughby's advice upon China's development.

The relationship between Willoughby and the United States' policy towards China also merits investigation. The sources studied during preparation of this thesis suggest that Willoughby was not in any formal sense an agent of the United States' government. Nevertheless, Willoughby maintained close but informal contact with the American diplomatic community in Peking, and his advice to Yuan Shih-k'ai on both foreign and domestic matters was certainly consistent with State Department objectives. Therefore, an analysis of Willoughby's career as an adviser not only should include an evaluation of his impact on China but should determine if his position had any substantive impact on American policy towards China and the Far East.

CHAPTER I

THE AMERICAN FRONTIER MOVES WEST

At the time of Willoughby's appointment as legal adviser, China had long been beset by domestic rebellion and foreign exploitation. During the nineteenth century, poor imperial leadership and revolts like the great Taiping Rebellion of 1850-1864 had gravely weakened the authority of China's Manchu dynasty. By mid-century, Great Britain, France, and other western nations had used their superior military power to force China's acceptance of a series of commercial treaties. These "unequal treaties" had two unfortunate effects, from a Chinese point of view. First, the commercial and legal privileges granted to westerners undermined China's sovereignty and threatened China with eventual dismemberment by the western powers. Second, the influx of western culture that accompanied trade intensified China's domestic turmoil and directly challenged the superiority of her political and social institutions.¹

Worried by the continued assaults upon China's sovereignty and traditional values, many Chinese called for modernization and reform to meet the challenge posed by the West. Leaders such as Li Hung-chang, governor of

¹John King Fairbank, The United States and China (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 147.

Kiangsu Province, urged China to resist further encroachments through "self-strengthening," an application of western technology to armaments, communications, and industry. The self-strengthening movement continued for thirty years, but China's attempts at modernization proved ineffective against nations which were anxious to expand their influence in Asia. In 1895 a modern, westernized Japan inflicted a humiliating defeat upon China and gained control of Korea. Japan's victory thoroughly discredited China's self-strengthening and opened her to new foreign demands for lucrative commercial concessions. The debacle of 1895 and the ensuing scramble for China's trade, railroads, and mineral resources caused her intellectuals to demand more substantive reform.²

The reform proposals of one intellectual, K'ang Yu-wei, won the attention of the Emperor Kuang-hsu. In the summer of 1898, the emperor--under K'ang's tutelage--issued nearly fifty decrees to reform China's administrative system. The reforms were short-lived. In September, the conservatives rallied around the Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi, overthrew the emperor, and reestablished a reactionary regime.³ Convinced that the Manchu court would not support progressive reform, many Chinese intellectuals embraced revolution as the means

²Ibid., pp. 176-177, 179.

³Jerome Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 1859-1916 (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1961), p. 54.

to rid China of a bankrupt monarchy and save her from dismemberment.⁴

The crisis in China coincided with crisis in the United States. The depression of 1892, the closing of the frontier in 1890, and the rapid industrialization of preceding decades convinced many Americans that the nation faced "market stagnation." Men of such diverse background as entrepreneur F. L. Stetson, populist Jerry Simpson, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, and author Brooks Adams argued that America needed an overseas market to absorb its surplus manufactures. Without that market, the United States' economy would collapse, and the ensuing economic dislocations would destroy American democratic institutions.⁵

The Americans who believed that expansion would preserve democracy and prosperity frequently envisioned China as a promising market for surplus American goods. Senator William Frye of Maine expressed this sentiment when he asserted: "We must have the market [China] or we shall have revolution."⁶ The New York State Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the American Development Company also wanted immediate

⁴Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, The Rise of Modern China (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 539.

⁵William A. Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy (New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1962), p. 24.

⁶Ibid., pp. 25-27.

access to the China market as "the solution to the closed frontier and industrial glut at home."⁷ The return of prosperity as the decade closed did not dim the vision of China as a consumer of American goods. Although China absorbed only three percent of all United States exports in the 1890's, the American Asiatic Association continued to promote the China market well into the twentieth century, long after Frye's specter of revolution faded.⁸

Commercial interests were not alone in their desire to carry the flag to China. Missionaries asked President William McKinley for protection and support for their public schools.⁹ Robert LaFollette and Theodore Roosevelt believed that expansion would advance the cause of civilization by carrying Anglo-Saxon ideas to the world.¹⁰ Others, including Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, argued that an expansionist foreign policy strengthened naval power and promoted national prestige. Still other Americans believed that the nation had a unique mission to spread the ideals of representative government throughout the

⁷Thomas McCormick, China Market: America's Quest for Informal Empire (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967), p. 53. See also Jerry Israel, Progressives and the Open Door (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1974), pp. 13-15.

⁸Paul Varg, "The Myth of the China Market, 1890-1914," American Historical Review, 73 (Feb., 1968), 742-743.

⁹Warren Cohen, America's Response to China (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1971), p. 54.

¹⁰Williams, Tragedy, p. 57.

world.¹¹ To extend United States influence abroad, Americans generally turned to commercial investments. As historian David Healy noted, these non-economic reasons for expansion fit into an "economic matrix," for the expansionists tended to "equate national worth and vitality with economic success."¹²

Once Americans recognized China as a potential area for expansion, they began to worry that foreign powers would dismember the hapless nation before the United States could enter the market on a competitive basis.¹³ Moreover, both the United States and Great Britain saw in the scramble for concessions that was occurring a real threat to the balance of power in Asia. Recognizing that the United States did not have the military strength to impose its own order on the Far East, Secretary of State John Hay and former Assistant Secretary W. W. Rockhill, with British help, circulated the first Open Door note on September 6, 1899.¹⁴ Many Americans were convinced that the guarantee of a "fair field" in China would enable the United States to dominate the China market, and with

¹¹Israel, Progressives, p. 12.

¹²David Healy, United States Expansionism (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), p. 177.

¹³Ibid., p. 165.

¹⁴Williams, Tragedy, p. 43; McCormick, China Market, pp. 134-137.

domination would come political stability and economic development.¹⁵

Political stability and economic development, however, did not come quickly to China. Although Americans who wished to "awaken" the "sleeping Chinese" to western values were discouraged by the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, they were encouraged by the Manchu dynasty's promises of reform. In the wake of the rebellion, the court ordered a reorganization of China's administrative and educational systems and proposed a nine-year plan for implementation of a constitutional monarchy. In actuality, however, the decade of reorganization and reform did not significantly alter the authoritarian character of the Manchu government, and revolutionaries doubted the sincerity of the court's reform plans. They continued to agitate for the termination of Manchu rule and the establishment of a western system of government.¹⁶

In 1911, when the Manchu dynasty attempted to use the fledgling national railroads as security for a loan, revolt broke out in the province of Szechwan and rapidly spread across China.¹⁷ In a desperate attempt to win

¹⁵Israel, Progressives, p. 13; Cohen, America's Response, p. 43.

¹⁶Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, p. 96.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 108-109.

popular support and suppress the rebellion, the Manchus hastily established a constitutional monarchy. On November 1, the court appointed Yuan Shih-k'ai, a successful governor and popular general, as premier.¹⁸

The man to whom the Manchus offered the premiership was one who easily recognized opportunity for personal advancement. A career military officer, Yuan Shih-k'ai had won considerable acclaim for his success in reorganizing China's army after its humiliation in the Sino-Japanese War.¹⁹ During the "Hundred Days" reforms, it was he who informed the Empress Dowager of the reformers' plans to rid the dynasty of her conservative influence. This act of loyalty solidified the Empress's confidence in Yuan, and he advanced rapidly under her patronage.²⁰ As provincial governor of Shantung in 1900, he shrewdly recognized the Boxers' weakness and kept his province under control even as Peking exploded.²¹ As a result of his caution, he won praise from western powers as a capable leader. A year later, as viceroy of Chihli, Yuan developed a close personal following among the officers and men of the Peiyang Army and consolidated a power base

¹⁸Hsu, Rise of Modern China, p. 559.

¹⁹Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, p. 52.

²⁰Ibid., p. 62.

²¹Ibid., pp. 70-71.

among leaders in North China.²²

Yuan's position was secure only as long as the Empress Dowager lived. When she died in 1908, Yuan's enemies at court schemed to remove him. Using the pretext of a foot injury, Yuan left Peking in 1909 and did not participate either in the last years of Manchu rule or in revolutionary activity.²³ Despite his enemies' scheming, he continued to exert influence over the northern army, which caused both the regent and the revolutionaries to bid for his support in 1911. By December of that year, Yuan entered peace negotiations with the revolutionaries who, by this time, had established a provisional government in Nanking under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen. The revolutionaries offered Yuan the presidency of the Chinese Republic, an invitation which caused Yuan to abandon the monarchy. With his defection, the Manchus had little choice but to abdicate.²⁴

Although the revolutionaries elected Yuan to the presidency in February, 1912, many of them regarded him with well-placed suspicion. Before he agreed to step down as president, Sun Yat-sen sought pledges of Yuan's support

²²Ibid., p. 73.

²³Li Chien-nung, The Political History of China, 1840-1928 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1956), p. 229.

²⁴Hsu, Rise of Modern China, p. 562.

for constitutional government and his willingness to locate the capital at Nanking. Ominously, Yuan did not accept Nanking as the capital of the new republic. A well-timed army "revolt" gave him a pretext for establishing the capital within his own power base, Peking, and at the same time provided him with an opportunity to secure his own position.²⁵

Yuan further consolidated his power within the new government by appointing military governors in the provinces and loyal supporters to important cabinet posts.²⁶ The Kuomintang, however, continued to dominate the National Assembly. To weaken the party's power, Yuan began in 1913 to replace Kuomintang generals with his own men.²⁷ When dissident army members staged a second revolution in July, 1913, Yuan had little difficulty destroying the opposition. His triumph over the revolutionaries reinforced his position as an unchallenged ruler.²⁸

The Kuomintang members of the National Assembly did not acquiesce in Yuan's accrual of power quietly. When Yuan tried to strengthen his position still further by negotiating a loan with a consortium of American, Japanese,

²⁵Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, p. 134.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 140-144; Hsu, Rise of Modern China, p. 564.

²⁷Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, p. 143.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 167-169.

and European bankers, the Kuomintang refused to ratify the agreement. Yuan retaliated by ordering, or at least acquiescing in, the assassination of Sung Chiao-jen, a Kuomintang leader. He also enlisted the help of his military governors to secure the passage of a new constitution which greatly increased the president's power.²⁹ The Assembly attempted to check Yuan's growing power by drafting yet another constitution which would establish a cabinet system of government.³⁰

Faced with such opposition, Yuan accused the 358 Kuomintang assemblymen of complicity in the summer's revolution and revoked their credentials as members of the National Assembly. Without the Kuomintang members, the Assembly had no quorum and thus could not conduct business. Yuan then dissolved the Assembly. This action, however, did not result in the demise of the Kuomintang. Outlawed, the party continued to carry on underground activities within China and from foreign countries.³¹

Those Americans who had praised the 1911 Revolution

²⁹Ibid., pp. 158-163, 177. The consortium to which Yuan turned for a loan was called the Six-Power Consortium. It included banking interests from Great Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Russia, and Japan.

³⁰Hsu, Rise of Modern China, p. 568.

³¹Ibid. See also Roy Curry, Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy, 1913-1921 (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), p. 102.

and welcomed republicanism to China did not foresee Yuan Shih-k'ai's swing towards absolutism. In 1912, the Outlook reported that American reformers--the supporters of Progressivism--hoped that the new republic would implement progressive reforms. Lillian Wald, Horace Allen, and E. A. Ross identified the 1911 Revolution with modernization, democracy, reform, efficiency, and progress.³² Edward Hume, the founder of the Yale-in-China medical school program, claimed that the revolt "[threw] open wide the doors of reform and progress in China." Hume wanted the West to "give unselfishly . . . in constructive assistance in any direction."³³

The elevation of Yuan Shih-k'ai to the presidency had also met with enthusiastic responses. William Jennings Bryan shipped an encyclopedia of Thomas Jefferson's ideas to Yuan and called him "the leader of the United States of China."³⁴ In 1915, William Francis Mannix, fresh from an interview with Yuan Shih-k'ai, reported in the Independent that Yuan's appearance and manner reminded him of Theodore Roosevelt. Enthusiastically he passed along Yuan's assessment of China's progress: "It may be said to our American friends that the new Republic of China is now

³²Israel, Progressives, pp. 100-102.

³³Quoted in Jonathan Spence, To Change China (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1969), p. 164.

³⁴Israel, Progressives, p. 101.

fairly started on the right road."³⁵ Another American, Sherwood Eddy, writing for World's Work, besides noticing the resemblance to Roosevelt, found parallels between Yuan's career and that of George Washington.³⁶ In the eyes of both Mannix and Eddy, China was clearly making progress towards democracy and efficiency.

The Taft administration did not completely share the enthusiasm of the journalists and reformers. Since the circulation of the Open Door notes, the United States had desired the establishment of an effective Chinese government, both to provide stability in Asia's balance of power and to allow United States' trade and investment in China.³⁷ Taft wanted to promote the United States' influence there, but he tried to maintain the Open Door through participation in the Four-Power, and later the Six-Power, consortium. Therefore, when the Chinese established a republic, Taft and Secretary of State Philander C. Knox hesitated to extend recognition. They feared that the Republic might fail to survive and that its collapse would touch off greater instability. Turmoil in China would then encourage further encroachment upon her sovereignty.

³⁵William Francis Mannix, "The Chinese Republic Reports Progress," Independent, 83 (July 25, 1915), 114.

³⁶Sherwood Eddy, "An Interview with Yuan Shih-k'ai," World's Work, 29 (Mar., 1915), 535.

³⁷Cohen, America's Response, p. 74.

Moreover, Taft--ever the legalist--was reluctant to extend recognition while other consortium members waited for proof that the Republic could effectively govern China.³⁸ The issue still hung fire when Taft left office in 1913.

When Woodrow Wilson entered the White House, he altered American strategy. Like Taft, he believed that American culture and institutions could be promoted with trade, but the consortium smacked too much of the "money trust." Moreover, Wilson disliked American participation in a consortium whose members had designs on China's integrity.³⁹ Consequently, he rejected the cooperative approach and embarked on a unilateral effort to maintain the Open Door. The United States recognized the Republic of China on May 2, 1913, and later withdrew from the Six-Power consortium.

Wilson was willing to assist China morally and financially, but he would not provide any assistance to American entrepreneurs which would threaten China's sovereignty. Indeed, as historian Tien-yi Li pointed out, Wilson believed that the United States had a Christian mission in the Far East: "the principles of order, justice, character, liberty, and good government should be taught to politically undisciplined peoples in that region." He

³⁸Charles Vevier, The United States and China, 1906-1913 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), pp. 205-207.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 207-210.

also believed that China should adopt American political forms. But first, China had to develop a strong central government to control internal disorder. In time, as American influence and commerce helped to stabilize China internally, Wilson believed that democracy would take root.⁴⁰

The president's belief that democracy, progress, and reform would come to China in the twentieth century was shared by many Americans. Indeed, American-sponsored reform efforts in China predated the establishment of the Republic. President Theodore Roosevelt had dispatched educator Charles Conant, political scientist Jeremiah W. Jenks, and labor expert Hugh Hanna to China to devise a plan for monetary reform.⁴¹ The 1911 Revolution sparked renewed efforts to bring modern, western ideas to "John Chinaman." D. Willard Lyon and the YMCA pushed for improvement of sanitation, prison reform, and the creation of parks.⁴² The American journalist and evangelist Sherwood Eddy pointed to the Chinese government's war on opium as evidence of "moral reform." For Eddy and the other Americans, the "yellow peril" had become "the golden

⁴⁰Tien-yi Li. Woodrow Wilson's China Policy: 1913-1917 (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), pp. 163-164, 203-205.

⁴¹Israel, Progressives, pp. 16-17.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 22-23.

opportunity of the West."⁴³

Well before the end of the Manchu dynasty, missionaries and university men had already established the University of Nanking, Hangchow Christian College, and Yale-in-China to bring civilization and "a progressive, stable government" to China. Yale's efforts were matched by Princeton-in-China and later, by Wisconsin-in-China, which represented the Progressive view of governmental reform.⁴⁴ Americans were pleased with these efforts to educate young Chinese; they were convinced that a western education of leaders was crucial to the creation of a modern China.

Some American progressives went to China to promote reforms similar to those being promoted in the United States. Gifford Pinchot, for example, encouraged conservation of Chinese rivers and forests. Other conservation experts and engineers recommended the introduction of efficient administrative techniques as a prerequisite for political and commercial progress. Dr. Paul S. Reinsch, American minister to China, and other experts such as Dr. Frank J. Goodnow of Columbia University, advocated political reforms along American lines.⁴⁵

Yuan Shih-k'ai was not unreceptive to offers of

⁴³Eddy, "An Interview with Yuan Shih-k'ai," 536-537.

⁴⁴Israel, Progressives, pp. 18-19, 113.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 20, 123.

American aid in government reform, since he hoped that friendly relations with western nations would win loans for China. To gain such support, Yuan employed a number of foreign advisers and maintained favorable connections with the American press.⁴⁶ In 1913, while visiting China, Dr. Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard, learned of Yuan's desire for an American adviser and apparently informed the Chinese that the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace was willing to nominate experts for the position. The nomination of Dr. Frank Goodnow, a law professor at Columbia, as legal adviser was accepted by the Republic of China. Goodnow served in China until the summer of 1914, when he accepted the presidency of Johns Hopkins University.⁴⁷ At that time he returned to the United States but retained his title. Goodnow was replaced in Peking by William Franklin Willoughby, who was officially designated as deputy legal adviser to the Republic of China.

The Americans who enthusiastically hailed the revolution of 1911 perhaps realized that China was merely a nominal republic. Nevertheless, Willoughby and other American reformers were confident that they could affect change in China, help her develop into a modern, republican state, and expand United States' influence in the Far East. But

⁴⁶Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, p. 173.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 203-204.

traditional China had not completely disappeared in the turmoil of the past century, and her leaders did not agree on the type of government China needed. To graft western democracy onto a tradition of authoritarian rule and to stabilize a country in the midst of sweeping change would prove exceedingly difficult, even for men of Willoughby's experience and ability.

CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATION OF A NEW CHINA HAND

Only forty-seven years old at the time of his appointment as deputy legal adviser, William F. Willoughby was well-known in academic and government circles as a scholar, diplomat, and administrator. Like many of his contemporaries of the Progressive Era, Willoughby was very much aware of the massive social and economic dislocations that accompanied the emergence of an urban, industrial America. He, too, recognized that government had to change as the society and economy changed in order to cope with industrialization and urbanization. In the first decades of the twentieth century, Willoughby's reform activities, especially the introduction of scientific management techniques to government, won him substantial recognition. An acknowledged expert in the field of public administration, Willoughby was very much a logical choice to fill the advisory post left vacant by Goodnow's departure from China.

The son of a Washington, D. C. judge, Willoughby was graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1888. Newspaper clippings and personal records revealed a young man remarkably similar to Frank Merriwell stereotype--both he and his twin brother Westel were serious students and

talented athletes. While still an undergraduate concentrating in political science, he and his brother co-authored a government textbook for the Washington, D.C., public schools. Three years later, he undertook a study of the French and Prussian civil service systems for the United States commissioner of education. In 1894, after completing his post-graduate studies at Johns Hopkins, Willoughby was appointed a statistical expert to the Department of Labor.¹

The year in which Willoughby entered the department was marked by labor turmoil. Only months before his appointment, Coxey's Army of unemployed had marched on the nation's capital, and the Pullman strike shook the nation. As an employee of the Department of Labor, Willoughby encountered first-hand the massive social and economic dislocations that accompanied the industrial depression of 1893-98. But like many Americans, he welcomed the new industrial age. He did not regard the formation of giant industrial combinations as either inherently evil or unnatural. In an 1898 article for the Yale Review, Willoughby argued that the formation of trusts was a natural result, a "normal evolution of industry."² Combinations could

¹For clippings relating to William F. Willoughby's Johns Hopkins years, see the Willoughby Papers, Box 1, Folder 1, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

²William F. Willoughby, "Concentration of Industry in the United States," Yale Review, 7 (May, 1898), 82, Willoughby Papers, Box 7.

provide positive benefits: the trusts often encouraged innovative and efficient use of resources, and they brought stability and predictability to the marketplace. Nor did combinations inevitably pose a threat to the worker, since large firms might be more capable of providing benefits to workers than small firms. Attempts to halt the natural process of concentration, he believed, were "doomed to failure" and were "thoroughly retrogressive."³

Willoughby's identification of concentrated economic power with progress was not altogether unqualified. In language which foreshadowed the "New Nationalism" of Theodore Roosevelt, he noted that only "normal" concentrations could honestly be praised, but "forced concentration" to achieve higher prices led to abuse. Indeed, Willoughby argued that "the public should not be left at the mercy of a few men." To prevent abuse, he proposed two counterweights to the power of corporations: a conservative trade union movement and a degree of government regulation.⁴ Although Willoughby did not propose specific regulatory measures, he did argue, as did others in the Progressive Era, that the application of proper management and administrative techniques could control the chaos and abuse that accompanied rapid industrialization. Proper

³Ibid., 92-93.

⁴Ibid., 93-94.

administration was more than a means to an end; to Willoughby, it became an end in itself. Good government rested upon sound and efficient administration.

The article for the Yale Review not only expressed Willoughby's opinion concerning the desirability of concentration but also revealed his long-standing concern for improved working conditions in the nation's industries. During his post-graduate studies, Willoughby had received two prizes from the American Economic Association for his essays, "Housing for the Poor in Cities" and "Child Labor."⁵ While a statistical expert for the Department of Labor, he served as a representative of the United States to international conferences on labor accidents, workmen's compensation laws, and housing.⁶ Willoughby's interest in labor problems continued long after he left the department. Some time after 1900, he served as president of the American Association for Labor Legislation, identified by historian Arthur Link as one of the "more radical" Progressive groups "dedicated to the cause of social justice."⁷

⁵See Chicago Tribune, January 24, 1891, and an unidentified newspaper clipping, Willoughby Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.

⁶Carroll D. Wright to Willoughby, February 20, 1900, and W. Q. Graham to all diplomatic and consular officers, August, 1894, ibid., Box 1, Folder 2.

⁷Arthur Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era (New York: Harper and Row, Torchbooks, 1954), p. 54.

The word radical, of course, has different shades of meaning. But to Willoughby, the solution to labor problems lay in the promotion of trade unionism, mediation, and appropriate labor legislation. He revealed his essentially moderate approach in a 1901 article for Current Encyclopedia, in which he praised the efforts of the National Civil Federation to promote arbitration of major labor disputes.⁸ The Federation, according to historian James Weinstein, hardly advocated the destruction of corporate capitalism; rather, its objective was to "stabilize the relationship between the work force and the corporate enterprise."⁹

The American Association for Labor Legislation was no hotbed of radicalism either. Founded by middle class reformers and financed by John D. Rockefeller and Elbert Gary, the Association worked to win acceptance of labor reforms and did achieve some successes.¹⁰ In 1916, Congress passed the Kern-McGillicuddy Act to provide workman's compensation for federal employees. As president of the AALL, Willoughby had actively participated in the Association's efforts to secure such legislation. Upon

⁸William F. Willoughby, "Conciliation and Arbitration," Current Encyclopedia, August 1901, Willoughby Papers, Box 7.

⁹James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1908 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 37-39.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 48.

his departure from China, the New York Times noted that Willoughby had "insistently demanded laws requiring better hours and working conditions for women and children."¹¹ His participation in labor reform in the years prior to 1916 clearly identified Willoughby with those Progressives actively engaged in social and economic reform.¹²

In September, 1900, Willoughby accepted an instructorship in economics at Harvard University. He did not remain long in Cambridge, however, for in 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed him treasurer of Puerto Rico.¹³ Willoughby remained on the island until 1909, serving as treasurer, secretary, and then acting governor. During these eight years, Willoughby overhauled the island's financial and administrative systems and reorganized municipal governments.¹⁴

At the core of Willoughby's work in Puerto Rico was a philosophy of government which not only placed him squarely in the mainstream of Progressive thought, but also strongly influenced his later recommendations to China. Central to

¹¹Link, Woodrow Wilson, p. 226; New York Times, July 13, 1914.

¹²Link, Woodrow Wilson, p. 54.

¹³J. H. Gore to William F. Willoughby, March 31, 1900; Allen Danforth to Willoughby, September 27, 1900; and Treasury Department to Willoughby, November 7, 1901, Willoughby Papers, Box 1, Folder 2.

¹⁴Clipping from the Daily Princetonian, February 26, 1910, ibid., Box 1, Folder 2.

Willoughby's reorganization of the island's government was the creation of a competent, well-trained, and impartial civil service. A professional civil service had long been regarded as a means of curbing "bossism" and corruption within the American political system, and Willoughby's creation of a civil service for Puerto Rico was intended to serve much the same purpose. But to reformers such as Willoughby, E. L. Godkin, and Frank J. Goodnow, the divorce of politics from the administration of government was more than an insurance policy against corruption; it became a means of establishing a "more scientific," "more efficient" government. The use of "experts" resulted not only in good government at the lowest possible cost but also in a government capable of resolving the complex social and economic problems of an urban, industrial society.¹⁵

According to historian Samuel Haber, it was Frank Goodnow who most effectively articulated the need to separate government administration from politics. Willoughby supported wholeheartedly Goodnow's belief that professional administration would provide better government. "The government best administered is best," he wrote.¹⁶ He

¹⁵Samuel Haber, Efficiency and Uplift (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 101-103, 107.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 105-106.

considered himself an expert, a specialist who could use his knowledge and scientific methods to work for the good of the nation. So convinced was he of the dangers of mixing politics with administration that there is no record of his ever having cast a ballot in a presidential election.¹⁷

Willoughby's eight years in Puerto Rico gave him a remarkable opportunity to turn ideas into substance. He not only established a civil service for the island but reorganized its taxation and accounting systems. He regarded his effort to transplant progressive ideas to Puerto Rico as successful, for he wrote:

. . . there was secured a service of greater efficiency than many believed possible to secure from one manned exclusively by native inhabitants of the Island.¹⁸

Through his brother Westel, Willoughby received word of Goodnow's interest in the reorganization of Puerto Rico's government. In a letter to Goodnow at the close of his term, Willoughby remarked that the American initiation .

¹⁷This information is not easily confirmed, and Willoughby's failure to vote might have been due to the fact that he was a resident of Washington, D. C., for most of his life. From an interview with William Westel Willoughby, Bohun Farm, Mathews, Virginia, July 31, 1974.

¹⁸William F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on Some Factors Involved in Securing Efficiency in the Organization of the Personnel in Government Service," p. 10, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42.

of the civil service system had rescued sixty-six cities from bankruptcy and provided Puerto Rican citizens with "works of permanent public utility."¹⁹ As a member of the Council of Puerto Rico, Willoughby's progressive ideas merged nicely with American imperialism. He had worked diligently to bring civilization, justice, and efficiency to backward peoples.

Although Willoughby regarded his work in Puerto Rico as challenging, he left the island at the end of his second term to accept an appointment as assistant director of the Census Bureau.²⁰ His appointment and that of the director, E. Dana Durand, were hailed as major steps towards securing scientific management and efficiency in government, because the appointments in the past had been part of the patronage system. Review of Reviews praised both Willoughby and Durand as "university-trained specialists," and Willoughby was singled out specifically as a "university type."²¹ The creation of a permanent Census Bureau seemed a successful implementation of the Progressives' "Wisconsin Idea."²²

¹⁹William F. Willoughby to Frank J. Goodnow, Jan. 9, 1909, Frank J. Goodnow Papers, Manuscript Collection, Johns Hopkins University Library.

²⁰Interview with William W. Willoughby, Bohun Farm, Mathews, Virginia, July 31, 1974.

²¹Clipping from Review of Reviews, Sept. 1909, Willoughby Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.

²²Haber, Efficiency, p. 106.

Two years later, Willoughby returned to the problem of government reorganization when he joined the Taft Commission on Economy and Efficiency in Government. As a member of the Commission, Willoughby came into close contact with other government administrators and experts on administration and finance. The Commission's chairman, Frederick Cleveland, had long been associated with New York's Bureau of Municipal Research, an organization which promoted the application of the techniques of scientific management to city and state problems. Frank Goodnow, then a professor of law at Columbia University, also was a member of the six-member commission.²³

The reforms recommended by Willoughby and the other members were essentially administrative, in keeping with the philosophy that efficient government could best be achieved through personnel and procedural alterations. Specifically, the Commission pressed for the adoption of proper budget procedures as a method of setting government priorities. The Commission also recommended the creation of a central administrative agency, very much like the present Office of Management and the Budget, to control both the personnel and the operation of government departments.²⁴

The commission's recommendations fell upon deaf ears.

²³Ibid., pp. 110-112.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 113-114.

Congress did nothing to act upon them during Taft's administration, and when Wilson entered office, the recommendations were laid aside. The commission's work was not totally wasted, however, for some of the reforms were actually initiated at the municipal level.²⁵ Moreover, Willoughby received considerable attention in the press for his work, and in 1920 he mounted a successful campaign for the institution of a national budget system. His experience on the Taft Commission also influenced his work in China. Throughout his term, he urged the Chinese to draw up budgets for the operation of every level of government.

At the conclusion of the commission's work, Goodnow had returned to Columbia, departing for China in the fall of 1913. Willoughby had left Washington for Princeton University, where he became McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence. In 1914, he received his appointment as deputy legal adviser to President Yuan Shih-k'ai.²⁶

Although the specific circumstances surrounding Willoughby's appointment are not known, one may reasonably surmise that his reputation as an administrator and his association with Goodnow over the years influenced his nomination for the post. State Department dispatches only

²⁵Ibid., p. 116.

²⁶Secretary of Princeton University to William F. Willoughby, June 10, 1912, Willoughby Papers, Box 1, Folder 1. See also newspaper clippings, Box 1, Folder 2.

indicate that the nomination of Goodnow's successor was handled by the Carnegie Endowment in the same manner as Goodnow's original appointment.²⁷

The response of Willoughby's Princeton colleagues to his appointment was enthusiastic, and it revealed something of the prevailing American attitudes toward China. Fascinated by the idea of advising a nation of 400 million citizens, Professor Robert McElroy declared that the office of constitutional adviser "appeals to the imagination as few positions can." Noting that "a giant nation" had turned to Willoughby for advice on the establishment of a representative government, McElroy compared him to an ambassador with "plenary powers to interpret the ideas of the West to the minds of the East."²⁸

The Daily Princetonian emphasized the importance of Willoughby's position as adviser, noting that he would "guide the organization of the government itself." He would advise the Chinese on presidential powers, the formation of the "central Parliament or Congress," and the establishment of the executive departments. "In fact," the newspaper concluded, "he will have the most important and

²⁷J. B. Moore, Counselor, to James Brown Scott, Secretary of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Jan. 24, 1914, United States Department of State Decimal File, 893.01A/22.

²⁸Robert McNutt McElroy, in an unidentified article, Willoughby Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.

responsible part in the great work of creating a new government for one of the greatest nations in the world."²⁹ The New York Times and the Boston Herald reminded readers of Willoughby's work with government reorganization and labor reform.³⁰ Clearly, the reform impulse in America was not confined within national borders; progressive reforms could be carried to China. China would benefit immeasurably from American willingness to help her develop representative government.

The China that Willoughby and his family found upon their arrival on October 13, 1914 belied the optimism of McElroy and the Daily Princetonian. In January, 1914, after he dissolved China's National Assembly, Yuan Shih-k'ai virtually ruled alone. Only a sixty-nine member Political Council functioned as his adviser.³¹ In order to maintain his legitimacy, Yuan called a National Conference in March, 1914 to draw up a provisional constitution. The finished document, promulgated May 1, 1914, gave Yuan extraordinary power over appointments and legislation. The constitution was ostensibly drafted with the assistance of Frank Goodnow, who afterwards

²⁹Daily Princetonian, n.d., ibid., Box 1, Folder 2.

³⁰New York Times, July 13, 1914; and Boston Herald, July 14, 1914, ibid., Box 1, Folder 1.

³¹Jerome Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 1859-1916 (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1961), p. 178.

returned to the United States.³²

The New York Times found the new constitution "remarkable for the powers of administration it confers upon the president."³³ An editorial in Outlook lamented the "reactionary" nature of the new constitution because it placed so much power in the president's hands.³⁴ Goodnow, however, was not disappointed with the document, at least publicly. Although he admitted upon his return that the president's powers were extensive, he also noted that the Chinese legislature was not too weak to check the executive. He reminded those who were dissatisfied with the constitution that it was merely a provisional document, until the transition to a representative form of government could be effected.³⁵ In reality, Yuan Shih-k'ai never called the legislature into being. The Council of State (Ts'an-cheng Yuan), a consultative body, acted in its place until the monarchical movement was well under way. Yuan's power to rule China was practically unchecked.³⁶

En route to China, Willoughby met many diplomats, businessmen, and correspondents who were familiar with

³²New York Times, May 2, 1914.

³³Ibid.

³⁴"China," Outlook, 107 (July 4, 1914), 523-524.

³⁵Frank J. Goodnow, in New York Times, June 22, 1914.

³⁶Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, p. 179.

conditions there. They were, on the whole, pessimistic about the chances for "decent government." After extensive conversations with them, Willoughby concluded that the establishment of a "good government" in China would be more difficult than in either the Philippines or Puerto Rico.³⁷

Upon his arrival in Peking, Willoughby discovered that the situation was more precarious than he imagined. The war had cut off China from European loans, weakening her financial stability; furthermore, the Japanese seizure of German territory in China severely strained Sino-Japanese relations.³⁸ Nevertheless, his first audience with Yuan Shih-k'ai was auspicious. Yuan was "strong, bright, and genial-looking," he reported, and able to "bear his responsibilities without undue worry."³⁹ Willoughby also established cordial relations with the American community in Peking, but he was careful to maintain a discreet relationship with American Minister Paul S. Reinsch. To his brother Westel he wrote, "My relations with the Legation should not be so close as to obscure in any way the fact that I am a Chinese and not an American

³⁷W. F. Willoughby to Westel Willoughby, Sept. 23, 1914, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

³⁸W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Oct. 15, 1914, ibid.

³⁹W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Oct. 29, 1914, ibid.

official."⁴⁰

For nearly three weeks after his arrival, much of Willoughby's time was spent in formal calls in the Legation Quarter, sight-seeing, and conversations with diplomats and newsmen. His impressions of Peking were very much like those of any Westerner. The beauty of the Chinese palaces and the colorful street scenes were frequently mentioned in letters to his brother and sister. As he travelled in Peking, Willoughby found cause for optimism. On a drive with Reinsch, he took heart from Chinese playing western sports: "I believe this matter of sports is of far-reaching importance--it brings out the idea of strenuous contest without the necessity for hostile feeling."⁴¹

Even the age-old problem of corruption did not seem an insurmountable barrier to progress. Willoughby noted with satisfaction that there was in China "a general desire" to "lessen this evil," and added bluntly that Americans could hardly criticize the Chinese for corruption in government. Surely, he felt, corruption could be controlled through "proper administrative systems for the collection of revenue and the auditing of expenditures."⁴²

⁴⁰W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Oct. 15, 1914, ibid.

⁴¹W. F. Willoughby to Alice, Oct. 18, 1914, ibid.

⁴²W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Oct. 29, 1914, ibid.

Unfortunately, the first memoranda which Yuan Shih-k'ai requested of Willoughby did not deal with administrative reform or constitutional revision, but with the effect of World War I on China. Willoughby cited racism, nationalism, and imperialism as the roots of that conflict but, like the Anglophile he was, he placed the blame for the war squarely on Germany and Austria. Predicting a protracted conflict that would greatly alter the balance of power in the Far East, Willoughby urged China to protect its territorial integrity and give no nation an excuse to intervene militarily in Chinese affairs. He also urged Yuan to begin the process of modernizing China even as the war continued.⁴³

As to financial and diplomatic assistance, Willoughby concluded that Yuan had to look to the United States, the sole major power with a "keen interest and sympathy" in the development of a stable, representative government. Warning that Russia, Germany, and particularly Japan wanted to extend their influence and territory in China, Willoughby pressed Yuan to recognize that Japan might try to make China "more or less an autonomous dependency" while the European powers were at war. Consequently, China had to create a stable government, because Japan would use any evidence of internal instability as an excuse for

⁴³W. F. Willoughby, "The War, Its Causes, and More Important Consequences Likely to Result from It," Nov. 1914, ibid., Box 5, Folder 42.

intervention. She might even go so far as to stir up insurrections to provide an excuse.⁴⁴

Willoughby followed up this lengthy memorandum with another on the seizure of Kiaochow by Japan. The seizure, he argued, was perfectly justified as long as Japan and Germany were at war; but the rights associated with the lease did not devolve automatically to Japan upon Kiachow's surrender, nor did Japan have the right to permanent occupation of the territory.⁴⁵

In the last of the three memoranda on the war, Willoughby argued that China had the right of representation at the peace conference since "her territory has been made the theatre of military operations." This was especially important because the peace conference would handle the belligerents' claims in China. Therefore, Yuan had to insure that China had a voice, if not equal status with the belligerents at the conference.⁴⁶

Although Willoughby was not an employee of the State Department, his suspicion of Japan's seizure of the German leaseholds in China was shared by many Americans, including Paul Reinsch. President Wilson and Secretary of State

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Surrender of Kiaochow by Japan to China," Dec. 1914, ibid.

⁴⁶W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Representation of China in the Conference to Determine the Terms of Peace on the Conclusion of the Present War," Dec. 1914, ibid.

Bryan also feared that Japanese encroachments upon China's sovereignty posed a very real threat to the Open Door.⁴⁷

Willoughby recognized, however, that the United States was preoccupied with European problems and would not risk war to block Japan's ambitions.⁴⁷ However, by pressing Yuan to stabilize China internally and by promoting the United States as the country most likely to aid China's political and economic development, he was certainly trying to guarantee that China would remain open to American influence.

The seizure of Kiaochow was very much a warning of future trouble. Towards the end of the year, the Japanese strengthened their garrisons in Manchuria and demanded that all Germans in China's customs service be replaced with Japanese.⁴⁹

It was not until December, 1914, that Yuan Shih-k'ai requested the first memorandum on China's political problems. The request was somewhat unusual because in the memorandum Willoughby analyzed the causes of political unrest in Mexico under the Diaz regime. In a letter to his

⁴⁷Roy Curry, Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy, 1913-1921 (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), p. 187; Arthur Link, Struggle for Neutrality (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 193-196.

⁴⁸Link, Struggle for Neutrality, pp. 267-268. See also Curry, Woodrow Wilson, p. 110.

⁴⁹Link, ibid., pp. 268-269.

brother Westel, Willoughby admitted that "one could read between the lines" of the memorandum to see that he was in fact drawing a parallel between Mexico's and China's experiences with republican government. Willoughby was convinced that Yuan wanted to use Diaz's experience as a "justification" to make himself "a second Diaz" in China.⁵⁰

In the memorandum, Willoughby noted that Mexico provided an "important experiment" in republican government because it illustrated the difficulties of establishing a republic government in a country with no history of self-rule. Diaz initially was successful because he ended disorder in Mexico "with an iron hand" and encouraged the "material progress" of the country. Mexico's "rapid development," Willoughby reminded Yuan, was due to the "scrupulous care" taken by Diaz "to protect foreigners and their investment

⁵⁰W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Dec. 10, 22, 1914, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35. Porfirio Diaz seized power in Mexico in 1876. Although he was always careful to maintain the form of Mexico's constitution, he changed it to permit his re-election as president for six successive terms and generally ruled as a dictator. His attempt to imprison a popular rival provoked a violent revolution, which forced his resignation in 1911. Although he promoted economic development and restored internal order, his refusal to abide by the spirit of the constitution angered many Mexicans and eventually contributed to his downfall. Had Diaz worked to implement republican government, historians might have seen him as a progressive leader rather than one of a number of dictators (Harold E. Davies, Revolutionaries, Traditionalists, and Dictators in Latin America [New York: Cooper Square Publications, Inc., 1973], pp. 163-171, passim). Sadly, Yuan Shih-k'ai did not accept Willoughby's advice. In 1915, his supporters used Diaz as a justification for restoration of a monarchy in China.

in the country."⁵¹

Despite promising beginnings, Diaz's regime foundered, and Willoughby drew two lessons from its wreckage. Part of Mexico's political instability stemmed from Diaz's failure to advance "the individual well-being" of the Mexican citizens. The concentration of wealth in a few hands had undermined the nation's stability. Even the United States, Willoughby noted, had undertaken "social reforms . . . directed towards correcting this evil." More importantly, Diaz had been unwilling to square his rule with Mexico's commitment to republican government. To be sure, the lack of a tradition of self-rule, an educated population, and a consensus on the forms of government might necessitate strong rule by one person as an interim measure; but an autocratic government under a republican form either had to create conditions favorable to the establishment of a republic or risk instability and loss of power.⁵² Willoughby's message to Yuan was clear: autocratic rule would not bring permanent stability to China. A ruler committed to China's best interests would work to establish a stable, progressive republic.

If Yuan received little sympathy from Willoughby for the establishment of an autocracy in China, he gained

⁵¹W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on Political Conditions and Problems in Mexico," Dec. 1914, ibid., Box 5, Folder 42.

⁵²Ibid.

considerable support for his attack on the Kuomintang Party. Addressing himself to the role of political parties in modern government, Willoughby again stressed the need for Yuan to commit himself to republic government. He wrote:

China has definitely adopted the principle of popular government as a political ideal towards the achievement of which her efforts will be directed.⁵³

However, Willoughby concluded that China was still in a "formative period," not yet completely ready for either full popular government or the constructive operation of political parties.⁵⁴

The task of Yuan Shih-k'ai's government, Willoughby asserted, was to develop the conditions necessary for the successful operation of a republic. Until consensus was reached on the exact form of government for China, and until popular government was close to reality, political parties should be restricted. Willoughby recognized the danger of his advice but emphasized that it was not to be construed to mean that public opinion should not be heeded by the government. In fact, he encouraged Yuan to work for the development of public opinion, to allow for "complete publicity" of all official acts, and even to permit criticism of the government. Government, he argued,

⁵³W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Place of Political Parties in a Constitutional Government," Dec. 1914, ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

should be accountable to the people and open in all its dealing with them "to lessen the dangers inherent in the centralization of power."⁵⁵

Both the memorandum on Mexico and the memorandum on political parties demonstrated Willoughby's desire for eventual republican government in China, but both expressed his conviction that China in 1914 was not ready for such a governmental system. In his memorandum on political parties, Willoughby listed the conditions he deemed critical for the operation of popular government: a homogenous population, a degree of national feeling, basic agreement on the form of government, respect for legal authority, experience in self-government, and freedom of public expression. These conditions did not yet exist in China.⁵⁶ In this context, Willoughby shared Goodnow's appraisal of political conditions in China, and, like Goodnow, he wanted a strong central government to serve as a transition to the establishment of a republic.

In conclusion, Willoughby's opinions on China's government, particularly on the role of political parties, were clearly influenced by his experience in Puerto Rico, to which he often referred in his memoranda. He believed that political parties in Puerto Rico were irresponsible

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

factions, serving more to disrupt the government than to provide a means of popular expression. Furthermore, he associated parties with the spoils system, which he regarded as a threat to efficient, scientific government.⁵⁷

Willoughby did not quarrel with a party's active formulation and expression of public opinion, but he believed that the execution of policy should be left to trained experts who would act impartially in the public's interests. Curbing the excesses of parties did not preclude progress towards popular government but enhanced it. Both in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, military governments had provided an orderly, stable environment for the development of popular government. A similar type of government, firm but not repressive, would provide the stability needed in China for the development of truly republican institutions.⁵⁸ Unfortunately for Willoughby, Yuan Shih-k'ai had no desire to nurture these conditions for a successful republic, and his efforts to steer China in that direction had little effect.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

CHAPTER III

PLANS FOR AN EFFICIENT CHINA

William Willoughby knew at the time of his arrival in Peking that the establishment of a strong national government was crucial to the creation of a modern China. Thus, as his memoranda on Diaz of Mexico and the role of political parties indicated, he was not opposed to the concentration of power in Yuan Shih-k'ai's hands, as long as the president remained committed to republican principles. If Yuan Shih-k'ai successfully established Peking's control of the country, Willoughby reasoned, he could then begin work on the reforms Willoughby considered most important for China's development: a complete reorganization of her civil service, audit and budget procedures, and taxation system. Events, however, soon forced Willoughby to postpone his work. In the opening weeks of 1915, both he and the Chinese were preoccupied with rumors of a restoration of the monarchy and feverish consideration of the Twenty-One Demands.

In August, 1914, the Council of State announced that the country needed a new presidential election law to repair "defects" in the election procedure established by the provisional constitution. In December, Yuan Shih-k'ai promulgated the new law, which lengthened the president's

term of office from five to ten years and set no limits on the number of terms the president could serve. If, at the end of his term, the Council of State decided that internal conditions were unsuitable for an election, the president could continue in office without the formality of an election. If the Council decided that the country was stable and elections could take place, a one-hundred member electoral college would elect the president from a list of three candidates chosen by the incumbent.¹

This procedure virtually assured that Yuan Shih-k'ai could serve as president for as many terms as he wished and could even designate his son as his successor. Since the president appointed the Council of State and had filled it with his supporters, it was highly doubtful that the Council would refuse to follow his wishes in deciding to hold an election. Since the Council of State appointed at least fifty members of the electoral college, even an election would result in Yuan's continuance in office. If he wished to name his son as his successor, he could accomplish this by placing his son's name on the list of candidates and then choosing the proper electors for the electoral college.²

Willoughby swiftly assessed the significance of this

¹W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the New Presidential Election Law," n.d., Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

²Ibid.

change in the election procedure. To his brother Westel, he wrote that the law "was as remarkable a state paper as you have ever read." In effect, Yuan claimed the presidency through "designation by the late dynasty rather than to election by the people." Willoughby was now convinced that the new election law was a prelude to restoring the monarchy. But because others in Peking saw no signs of imminent restoration, he wrote to Westel that he might have overestimated the importance of the new election procedures. Despite his reservations, Willoughby cautiously prepared a memorandum on the new law, fully aware that Yuan might be using his foreign advisers to give the change legitimacy.³

In light of Willoughby's suspicions, his memorandum on the presidential election law was remarkably free of criticism. He made no suggestions for alteration or repeal but stressed that the change might enable China to maintain stability and prepare her for popular government. The removal of the succession to the presidency from the "intrigue" of parties and factions, he thought, might well be essential in the transition to a republic. "In the first enthusiasm for popular government," he wrote, not enough care had been taken to protect China from the threat of internal upheaval. A strong executive could

³W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Jan. 7, 27, 1915, ibid., Box 5, Folder 35.

organize an administrative system in which "merit and efficiency" rather than "political considerations," might determine appointments and promotions. Summing up his case for the law, Willoughby noted that stability and sound administration were "of especial value during a transition period such as the one through which China is now passing."⁴

At the conclusion of his memorandum, Willoughby turned from the advantages to the disadvantages inherent in a highly centralized decision-making process. There was always a danger, he stressed, that great power could be used "for purposes other than the promotion of the public welfare," and that the "political aspirations" of the people could be crushed. Such dangers could be avoided if the government continued to be accountable to the people, protected "free discussion of political matters," and established "efficiency and honesty in the administration of public affairs."⁵

Reminding Yuan that China's constitution gave sovereignty not to the executive but to the people, Willoughby called for "complete publicity" of all actions and sound fiscal management to insure good government and prepare the Chinese for "larger participation" in "public

⁴Willoughby, "Memorandum on the New Presidential Election Law."

⁵Ibid.

affairs." Accountability, Willoughby argued, would even be politically expedient, since it would effectively disarm government critics. After subtly warning Yuan Shih-k'ai that abuse of power would undermine his government, Willoughby concluded on a positive note:

Experience furnishes abundance of proof that as much depends upon the spirit and manner in which a political system is operated as upon its technical provisions.⁶

Willoughby sent a copy of the memorandum to Westel, who was then at Johns Hopkins and in close communications with Goodnow. He had emphasized the positive benefits of a strong executive, he confided, because he did not want to offend Yuan or place a stamp of approval upon despotism. However, on the same day, he wrote Goodnow that Yuan would be dissatisfied with his cautious endorsement of the law:

What the President wanted, of course, was a defense of this act which he could publish. I think it quite doubtful whether he will care to publish my paper.⁷

The conditions under which Willoughby wrote the memorandum revealed the difficulties he faced in influencing China's development in any meaningful sense. He knew that Yuan sought his advice as a justification because the memorandum was requested after the new law was promulgated.

⁶Ibid.

⁷W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Jan. 27, 1915, ibid., Box 5, Folder 35; and to Dr. Frank J. Goodnow, Jan. 27, 1915, Manuscript Collection, Johns Hopkins University Library.

Nevertheless, Willoughby remained committed to the establishment of a stable China and the development of conditions leading to a republican form of government.

China's constitutional problems, however, faded in importance as tensions between China and Japan reached the flash point. In January, 1915, Japan presented her Twenty-One Demands, which posed a serious threat to China's sovereignty. The Demands were presented in five groups, all of which gave Japan predominance in determining China's economic, political, and military affairs. Of the groups, the fifth was the most important, because it would virtually have transformed China into a protectorate of Japan. The Japanese insisted upon total secrecy of the true nature of the demands, particularly that of the fifth group.⁸

Had the Chinese not leaked a copy of the actual demands to diplomats and newsmen, Japan's attempt to conceal their contents might have succeeded.⁹ As soon as American Minister Paul S. Reinsch and Chargé E. T. Williams learned of the real version, they recognized the threat to the Open Door. Reinsch advised Yuan to consider each demand separately in negotiations with Japan--in effect, to

⁸Tien-yi Li, Woodrow Wilson's China Policy, 1913-1917 (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), pp. 102-104.

⁹Jerome Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 1859-1916 (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1960), p. 191.



stall for time.¹⁰ It was from Reinsch rather than the Chinese that Willoughby first learned of the demands, and Willoughby, like Reinsch, regarded Japan's actions with grave suspicion.

The reasons for this suspicion lay at least in part in his concern over the "real motives" behind the Twenty-One Demands. Willoughby regarded with skepticism Japan's claim that she was defending China against rapacious western nations. If Japan had China's best interests at heart, he wrote, she would not have treated the Chinese with "studied arrogance" and threatened her national sovereignty. Willoughby was convinced that Japan sought to be "not merely the leader of Asia but the master." Whatever Japan's motives, the presentation of the Twenty-One Demands had given notice to the world that Japan sought hegemony in Asia. The "yellow peril" was not yet imminent, but Willoughby cautioned that Japan's actions had raised the "great question of the East versus the West."¹¹

Not long after presentation of the demands, Yuan Shih-k'ai turned to Willoughby for help in the crisis. He first requested a memorandum on the "correctness" of the

¹⁰Paul S. Reinsch, An American Diplomat in China (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page, and Co., 1922), pp. 129-130, 132-133. See also Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, pp. 192-193.

¹¹W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Mar. 15, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35. In this letter, Willoughby revealed that his information on the Twenty-One Demands came from Reinsch and American journalist Frederick Moore.

presentation. Although he was puzzled by the purpose of Yuan's request, Willoughby turned out a vigorous denunciation of the Japanese minister to China. The presentation was not only "insulting" and deceiving, but violated proper protocol.¹² Of more importance was Yuan's request in March that Willoughby write an article on the Twenty-One Demands which could be published in the United States to win American support for China.

Willoughby was quite willing to write the article. In fact, he had hoped that Yuan would seek his advice and in late March had even offered to act as an emissary between the American Legation and the Chinese government.¹³ Willoughby, like Reinsch and Chargé d'Affairs E. T. Williams, was very much concerned that the State Department had not grasped the seriousness of Japan's demands. To Goodnow, Willoughby wrote that Secretary of State Bryan was too easily deceived by Japanese assurances of safety for the Open Door.¹⁴ To his brother, he confided, "Bryan is looked upon as an innocent child in their [the Japanese]

¹²W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Correctness of the Procedure of the Japanese Minister in Presenting Certain Demands of his Government Directly to the President of China," n.d., Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42.

¹³W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Mar. 29, 1915, ibid., Box 5, Folder 35.

¹⁴W. F. Willoughby to Frank J. Goodnow, Mar. 18, 1915, Goodnow Papers.

hands."¹⁵ Consequently, Willoughby urged Goodnow to make effective use of the article as a means to influence American opinion. He did, however, caution Goodnow not to use his name on the article, fearing that the publication of an adviser's name would anger the Japanese.¹⁶

In the memorandum which might have been used as a draft for the article, Willoughby vigorously warned his American readers that the Japanese had succeeded in concealing the gravity of their demands and argued that the demands, if accepted, would lead to a loss of Chinese sovereignty. In a series of rhetorical questions, he identified Japan as a threat to reform and progress in China and warned all western nations to consider Japan's motives for the demands.¹⁷

Events moved faster than the article. Although Goodnow received it in April or May, it came too late for any significant impact on American opinion. Goodnow informed Willoughby that the Chinese minister in Washington had shown him a copy of the Japanese demands early in 1915, and he had informed Bryan of their significance:

¹⁵W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Mar. 15, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

¹⁶W. F. Willoughby to Goodnow, Mar. 18, 1915, Goodnow Papers.

¹⁷W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on Japanese Demands on China," n.d., Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42.

. . . in case China acceded to these demands its independence would be seriously impaired and the commercial interests of Americans in the East would be affected.¹⁸

By March, Bryan began to recognize the need to defend the Open Door against Japanese pressure. Although he probably conceded too much to Japan, the United States and Great Britain did pressure the Japanese into withdrawing the fifth group of demands in May.¹⁹

Despite the success of the United States and Great Britain in softening some of the demands, it was clear that Japan had a fairly free hand in China as long as the war in Europe lasted. The United States had no intention of intervening militarily to preserve China's territorial integrity, and no European power could afford military intervention. In President Wilson's analysis, China was too weak internally to protect her sovereignty, and until China achieved some degree of stability she was fair game for any country capable of exploiting her weakness.²⁰

As the weeks passed, Willoughby reached the same conclusion. Faced with desperate internal weakness, China had three options: she could give in to Japan, and

¹⁸Frank J. Goodnow to W. F. Willoughby, Mar. 23, 1915, Goodnow Papers.

¹⁹Arthur Link, Struggle for Neutrality (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 294-297.

²⁰Tien-yi Li, Woodrow Wilson's China Policy, p. 129.

become for Japan what India was to England; she could be cut up into "spheres of influence," each administered by a foreign country; or she could give foreigners control of China's government services, as had already been done with the salt gabelle and the Chinese customs service.²¹

The last option seemed most promising to Willoughby. Unless Chinese affairs were "administered by outside help" as the United States had done in the Philippines and Puerto Rico, China could never hope to preserve her integrity and independence. Currency, taxation, and banking systems had to be reformed for China's government to survive, and only foreign administration could accomplish the reforms. Falling back on a comparison familiar to American progressives, Willoughby remarked that China was like a bankrupt firm. To achieve stability, he suggested that she be put through "receivership."²²

When Willoughby communicated these options to his brother, he was not merely engaging in rhetorical exercise. He was trying to effect the third option. From his arrival, the Chinese had pressed him for advice on floating a large loan for the reorganization of her financial system. With the presentation of the Twenty-One Demands, the Chinese had grown increasingly desperate for funds and now pressed

²¹W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Feb. 27, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

²²Ibid.

the loan once again. At the request of President Yuan Shih-k'ai, Willoughby wrote a lengthy letter to Goodnow, asking him to explore the possibility of a loan with commercial bankers in the United States.²³

In Willoughby's decision to seek a loan lay the convergence of many American interests in China. To be sure, Willoughby, like his fellow progressives, was anxious to secure reform in China and eventually to establish a republic there; but to secure the reforms, Willoughby turned to American commercial interests. American investment would provide China with stability and prosperity, the basis of progressive government. By granting a loan, the United States would block Japan's attempts to subvert the Open Door and would encourage China to adopt measures to strengthen herself internally--and make her a receptive market for both goods and ideas.

In the memorandum to Yuan Shih-k'ai on the loan, Willoughby first stressed that the immediate crisis with Japan was only the first of a series of confrontations, unless China could make meaningful reforms which would help her resist Japanese domination. Without reform, China could not hope to develop a strong navy or "free herself" from a "humiliating" and untrustworthy reliance on foreign powers. To develop China, Willoughby proposed

²³W. F. Willoughby to Goodnow, Feb. 22, 1915, Goodnow Papers.

sweeping monetary and fiscal reforms. The reforms, however, would be expensive. A loan of at least \$100 million in gold was absolutely necessary. As he realistically pointed out, China's tax system could not support even the immediate needs of the government; it could hardly support major reform.²⁴

To obtain a loan of that size, China had to turn abroad. Willoughby advised Yuan that only the United States could offer such a loan, and indeed was the only country to which China could safely go. Only the United States would refrain from placing China under burdensome "political obligations." He wrote:

The only political interest that the United States had in China is that she should succeed in her present efforts to achieve a strong and stable government.²⁵

Once he had made his best case for an American loan, Willoughby then outlined the conditions of the proposed loan for Yuan. In the first place, he warned, the loan would have to go towards a sincere reform of banking and currency. Since any loan would have to be secured, the Chinese tax system needed a complete overhaul to provide adequate security. Moreover, Willoughby, convinced that

²⁴W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Desirability of China Securing a Loan in the United States for the Purpose of Accomplishing the Reform of her Currency, Banking, and Taxation Systems," n.d., Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42.

²⁵Ibid.

only foreign administration could provide stability in China, warned Yuan Shih-k'ai that American bankers might well insist that "Americans or at least persons in whom they have confidence" would be employed by the Chinese "to superintend or direct the execution of the reforms."²⁶

Willoughby, of course, was aware that the Chinese would be less than receptive to this last condition but, as he wrote to his brother, China needed the loan so desperately that she would "pay the price in order to get it."²⁷ Willoughby stressed to Yuan that American administrators were no threat to China's sovereignty. Turning to the American administration of Puerto Rico and the Philippines as examples, he carefully pointed out that Americans had worked very hard to turn over administration to trained "native inhabitants." In light of China's insolvency, Willoughby vigorously asserted that "this temporary alienation of control may be wholly good," and offered China a chance for progress and stability. Warning that bankers considering the loan would be skeptical of China's ability to repay, Willoughby repeatedly urged Yuan's emissaries to be "frank and fair" in dealing with them.²⁸ Willoughby's insistence on pledges of reform

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Feb. 27, 1915, ibid., Box 5, Folder 35.

²⁸Willoughby, "Memorandum on Securing a Loan," ibid., Box 5, Folder 42.

or American control indicated that his faith in the Chinese ability to achieve stability on their own had been sorely tried.

Although Willoughby wanted very much for the loan to be made, he was very skeptical about China's ability to secure such a large loan from American bankers. Consequently, for either help or reassurance, he floated a trial balloon to Reinsch. In March, he wrote to Goodnow that Reinsch had responded quite favorably to the loan proposal.²⁹ From Goodnow came still more encouragement. Both B. Howell Griswold of Alexander Brown and Sons and President Wilson had promised strong support.³⁰ The exact conditions of the loan, however, were a considerable problem, and Goodnow urged Willoughby to begin work on plans satisfactory to both the Chinese and the American bankers.³¹

The loan proposal, coming as Japan threatened the Open Door, provided Wilson and Reinsch with one method of curbing Japanese ambition and extending American influence in Asia. Both Wilson and Reinsch were very much in favor of American loans and investments in China, for they believed

²⁹W. F. Willoughby to Goodnow, Mar. 18, 1915, Goodnow Papers.

³⁰Roy Curry, Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy, 1913-1921 (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), pp. 149-151.

³¹Goodnow to W. F. Willoughby, May 14, 1915, Goodnow Papers. Both Tien-yi Li and Roy Curry wrote that W. W. Willoughby suggested the loan to Yuan Shih-k'ai. Apparently they have confused William F. Willoughby with his twin, because Westel was at Johns Hopkins at this time.

very strongly that financial, commercial, and industrial development not only aided China's transformation to a modern, progressive nation but contributed to the United States' prosperity as well.³² But the high hopes for the loan faded quickly. Although Wilson endorsed the loan proposal, he refused to guarantee that the United States government would enforce collection of the loan. Faced with Wilson's refusal, worried by China's weakness, and preoccupied with the credit demands of the European war, American bankers refused to accept the risks associated with a \$100 million loan. Negotiations for the loan collapsed while still in preliminary stages, and with them collapsed Willoughby's plans for direct American administration of the reforms.³³

The failure to secure the loan dimmed hope for major reform in China. From his arrival, Willoughby had been anxious to reorganize China's administrative, monetary, and fiscal systems. The first major reform was the overhaul of the land tax, and he had intricately bound the tax to the loan negotiations. Willoughby suggested that the reorganized land tax be used as security for the loan. The loan, then, not only would have strengthened China in the face of the Twenty-One Demands but would have acted

³²Tien-yi Li, Woodrow Wilson's China Policy, pp. 164-165.

³³Ibid., p. 194; Curry, Woodrow Wilson, pp. 148, 150-151.

as a lever on Yuan Shih-k'ai to guarantee change.

The proposal on reform of the land tax submitted to Yuan Shih-k'ai early in 1915 was one of Willoughby's most lengthy and methodical memoranda, running some eighty typewritten pages. Willoughby drew heavily upon his experience with Puerto Rico's tax system, and he incorporated proposals progressives had favored for the United States. The land tax was essentially to be a tax on land value; such a tax would be best, Willoughby argued, because land values remained "comparatively stable" and accrued a predictable revenue.³⁴

Once the type of taxation had been recommended, Willoughby put forth a very detailed analysis of how such a system should be organized. Deftly tying a well-administered taxation system to China's progress--and Yuan's survival--Willoughby frequently stressed that inefficient, unfair assessments and collections encouraged opposition and even resistance to the central government. An honest, efficient tax system, he reminded Yuan, educated the citizenry politically and also secured their loyalty.³⁵ To secure a proper administration, Willoughby fell back upon his experience as Puerto Rico: in essence, he proposed a model civil service system for China.

³⁴W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Reform of the Land Tax System in China," n.d., Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42.

³⁵Ibid.

As he outlined the duties of each tax official, Willoughby insisted that only independent, permanent specialists--the efficient, apolitical experts so admired by progressives--assess and collect the land tax. Willoughby here was adamant. The tax collectors would have to be vastly different from the provincial rogues previously employed, unless China wanted to risk popular unrest. Naturally, the tax service would be organized by grades, with promotions based strictly on merit. Such honest, efficient, and fair administration of taxation would surely win support for the government, and still more support would accrue if the taxation plan were effected by a vote of the provisional national assembly instead of presidential order. Hoping to steer Yuan Shih-k'ai towards the adoption of republicanism, Willoughby stressed that the endorsement of this body would mean that "the people themselves, acting through their legal representatives, had reached a determination to put their financial system upon a sounder basis."³⁶ This approval would not only curb opposition but would surely enhance the legitimacy of Yuan's government.

It is difficult to determine how much Willoughby knew of China's traditions and history when he made his suggestions for reform of her land tax and administrative system.

³⁶Ibid.

Admittedly he too often made faulty comparisons of China with Puerto Rico, ignoring the very real differences in population and culture. Too often, the Puerto Rican "native inhabitants" seemed all too similar to Chinese natives, perhaps a reflection of racism on Willoughby's part. But he certainly knew that the Manchu dynasty and its predecessors had operated an elaborate civil service system with competitive examinations and graded ranks. Too, he probably knew that China had continued the use of a censorate after the end of the Manchu dynasty to expose wrongdoing or weakness on the part of government officials. The provisional constitution of May 1, 1914 had even established an administrative court to adjudicate disputes over government rulings. What is clear, however, is that Willoughby had little faith in the efficacy of Yuan Shih-k'ai's administrative system and was prepared to replace it with a civil service modelled upon the administrative systems of western nations.³⁷ He might have used the western model because he was so familiar with the operation of civil service systems in the United States, Great Britain, France, and Germany. On the other hand, his willingness to introduce a western system into China might well have stemmed from a belief that western institutions were superior and offered a model for the Chinese to

³⁷Franklin Houn, Central Government of China, 1912-1918 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1957), pp. 102-103.

imitate.

Willoughby's proposal for land tax reform apparently won enough support to be carried beyond the memorandum, because Yuan Shih-k'ai wanted him to stay on beyond his term as adviser to overhaul the land tax system. Willoughby did not particularly want the appointment because he did not wish to remain in China beyond the end of his term. Moreover, the plan to put the land tax under his administration ran into stiff Japanese and Russian opposition, probably because they feared increased American influence in Yuan's government.³⁸

Throughout 1915 and 1916, Willoughby wrote three additional memoranda recommending administrative and fiscal reforms, and these were largely an extension of the principles he had stressed in the longer land tax proposal. They were more of a technical nature, concerning the establishment of various administrative services, and the appeals to political expediency were not so prominent. The memoranda did, however, stress the progressive principles Willoughby had tried to effect in Puerto Rico and in the United States.

The document on the organization of a civil service system concentrated primarily on procedure, not philosophy, and repeated many of the recommendations presented in the

³⁸W. F. Willoughby to Simon N. D. North, May, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 36.

land tax proposal. As in previous memoranda, Willoughby argued that reform was worthless unless China created an efficient administration to staff her government departments. He followed with remarkably detailed advice on promotions, compensation, and tenure within the service. Throughout, Willoughby warned the Chinese not to repeat American mistakes: partisanship or favoritism must not impede the operations of an independent, professional service.³⁹

The structure of Willoughby's civil service would have seemed familiar to an imperial statesman. The imperial bureaucracy had provided safeguards against corruption, promotions based on merit and seniority, competitive examinations, and ratings and grades. Also, both systems were designed to promote harmony among different elements of society. However, the nature of the harmony and the means by which men would achieve it differed greatly. In China harmony was not achieved through a balance of the interests of entrepreneurs, citizens, and labor, but through obedience to the social prescriptions set down in Confucian classics and histories. The scholar official of Confucian tradition had only one essential administrative goal: to

³⁹W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on Some Factors Involved in Securing Efficiency in the Organization of the Personnel in Government Service," n.d., ibid., Box 5, Folder 42.

restore a tranquil, harmonious society.⁴⁰ To govern effectively, the scholar-official had to study the classics and inculcate in the people the rules of propriety which governed the relationships of men.⁴¹

In practice, a number of realities scarred this ideal administrative system. For example, society was supposedly characterized by close interpersonal relationships, but the tasks of government--that is, tax collection or law enforcement--forced the scholar away from a humanistic relationship with the people. Too, in spite of all their study and effort on examinations the officials frequently proved to be corrupt and arrogant.⁴² Perhaps a more serious problem for the Confucian scholars was inherent in their utopian vision of society, because it forced the scholar officials to look back to an ancient order. The vision not only made them blind to changes in society wrought by western technology and ideas but led the scholars to become entrenched defenders of despotic autocracy. The concern over maintenance of a stable social order lent itself to the acceptance of autocracy as natural and elevated

⁴⁰C. K. Yang, "Some Characteristics of Chinese Bureaucratic Behavior," in Confucianism in Action, eds. David S. Nivison and Arthur F. Wright (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), p. 138.

⁴¹Arthur F. Wright, ed., Confucianism and Chinese Civilization (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), p. xi.

⁴²C. K. Yang, "Some Characteristics of Chinese Bureaucratic Behavior," pp. 146, 148.

every emperor to the status of a sage.⁴³

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Confucian scholar-bureaucrat tradition was under serious attack. The scholars had failed to maintain the old order with "self-strengthening." The respect for the authority of both father and emperor seemed inconsistent with self-government, the emancipation of women, and recognition of individual dignity. Indeed, it seemed doubtful that the generalist of the Confucian tradition could cope with the demands of a technologically advanced, urban, industrial nation.⁴⁴

After Japan defeated China in 1895, steamships, steel, and armaments seemed more appropriate topics for study than Confucian classics. The scholar K'ang Yu-wei wanted to abolish the "eight-legged essay" during the Hundred Days reforms, but conservatives permitted no change in the scholar tradition. In the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion, however, the Manchus abolished the old examination system and ordered the inclusion of modern topics in all future examinations.⁴⁵

⁴³William T. DeBary, "Some Common Tendencies in Neo-Confucianism," Nivison and Wright, eds., Confucianism in Action, pp. 19-23.

⁴⁴Immanuel C. Hsu, The Rise of Modern China (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 534; Arthur F. Wright, ed., The Confucian Persuasion (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), p. 18.

⁴⁵Hsu, Rise of Modern China, p. 446; Houn, Central Government, pp. 6-7.

Under the provisions of the constitution of 1914, Yuan Shih-k'ai altered the organization of the old censorate and added an administrative court. But Yuan personally controlled both the personnel and organization of all government agencies, and under his direction the administrative system functioned erratically.⁴⁶ For example, the constitution provided for a board of audit, but the board accomplished nothing. In theory, Yuan Shih-k'ai prepared a budget, but in practice, he spent funds as he saw fit.⁴⁷

When Willoughby proposed reorganization of the land tax, the civil service, and later, the financial system, he was in effect attempting to fill an institutional vacuum. He was not, however, free of remnants of China's traditional bureaucratic system. The Confucian order was under attack, to be sure; but many Chinese still adhered to Confucian principles, and some wanted Confucianism established as a national religion. Yuan Shih-k'ai used Confucian rites to strengthen his claim on China's throne, and bureaucrats of Confucian persuasion still retained posts in his government.⁴⁸

The bureaucracy that Willoughby proposed would have

⁴⁶Houn, Central Government, p. 89.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 99.

⁴⁸Tse-tsung Chow, "The Anti-Confucian Movement in Early Republican China," in Wright, ed., The Confucian Persuasion, pp. 290-291; Jerome Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 2nd ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 208.

been vastly different from that of traditional China. The impartial expert, a specialist, would have had little in common with the generalist of imperial days. Instead of working for the restoration of a society characterized by hierarchy and stability, Willoughby's bureaucrat used his specialized knowledge to promote political democracy. The primary function of his bureaucrat was harmonization of the interests of citizens, labor, and business, not the restoration of an ancient utopia. As in the Confucian tradition, the bureaucrat acted in the people's best interests, but under Willoughby's plan, the government--and ultimately the bureaucrat--were accountable to the citizens.

Willoughby did not believe that the citizens of China were prepared to define their own interests through self-government. Previously he had written that conditions in China were not yet suitable for the establishment of political parties or legislative bodies. Instead, he urged China's leadership to develop conditions under which self-government could exist, and the bureaucracy was a key element in developing these conditions. The bureaucrat, like his Confucian counterpart, would teach the people by the efficient completion of his tasks that their government was legitimate, stable, and capable of protecting their interests. When the people recognized the authority of their government, national leaders could then encourage the establishment of local, provincial, and national

assemblies.⁴⁹ Instead of protecting the old order, Willoughby's bureaucrat prepared China for massive social and political change.

In short, then, Willoughby's plan for a civil service was not so revolutionary in its structure as in its implications. If his plan was put into effect, China would have to adopt republican principles--principles very much inconsistent with a hierarchical social structure. In truth, it is doubtful that the Chinese could have adopted his proposals. As Willoughby realized, the Chinese had not yet reached a consensus on the type of government they wished to have, and the "common man" had not yet developed either the capability or the desire to exercise his political rights.⁵⁰ A tradition of authoritarian rule and a recent history of internal disorder proved to be rocky ground for the growth of republican ideas.

As part of his plan to reorganize China's fiscal affairs, Willoughby also recommended the establishment of a central board of financial control to administer China's budget. This recommendation was not entirely new to China. During the Hundred Days reforms of 1898, reformers had recommended the publication of a budget, and a decade

⁴⁹W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Adjustment of the Financial Relations Between the Central Government, the Provinces, and the Local Governing Bodies," n.d., Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42.

⁵⁰Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 2nd ed., p. 211.

later, the Manchus promised to implement a budget system. The constitution of the republic also established a budget, but Yuan Shih-k'ai had never prepared an effective one.⁵¹ In his memorandum, Willoughby urged the Chinese to prepare budgets, audit accounts, and publish proper reports. When properly administered, he argued, budget and audit systems enabled the president to exercise close supervision over his executive departments. Furthermore, if the central board drafted and enforced regulations for the financial administration of the provinces and localities, Yuan Shih-k'ai could strengthen his control of the hinterland.⁵²

In his last memorandum on administrative reform, Willoughby explained in more detail his plans to extend the budget and audit systems to the provincial and local governments. His plans focused on a significant problem in China, because the provincial governments were tied only tenuously to Peking. Yuan Shih-k'ai held the provinces in check more by his decision to appoint loyal military governors than by claims to the loyalty of the people. Certainly the people of far-removed provinces had few government services to bind them daily to Peking. The extension of the financial system, Willoughby reasoned, would provide a method of placing China under the direction of a

⁵¹Hsu, Rise of Modern China, p. 446; Houn, Central Government, p. 99.

⁵²Willoughby, "Memorandum on Adjustment of Financial Relations."

central administrative system.⁵³

Willoughby first recommended that the central government appoint administrators to supervise local and provincial finances. The central board should then grant each locality and province a share of general tax revenue for local use. Efficient, responsible administration of local and provincial finances would reinforce the legitimacy and authority of all levels of government. Then, when the people recognized the legitimacy of their government and respected its authority, officials could allow popular participation in political organizations and eventually in assemblies. Willoughby wrote:

If China is to bring into existence a form of government under which larger and larger participation in the conduct of government affairs is to be conferred on the people, or they acquire the capacity for the proper exercise of political power, a beginning must be made in the field of local and provincial government.⁵⁴

Because Willoughby did not define precisely either the powers of the local and provincial authorities or the exact share of revenue they would receive, it is difficult to evaluate the effect of this proposal. Certainly too great a degree of financial autonomy risked further disintegration of relations between Peking and the provinces. Willoughby asserted that under his plan the central government

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

retained enough control over the localities to prevent such disintegration. No taxes could be levied or money borrowed without permission of the central government; the "chief executive" of each province had to submit a budget for Peking's review; and finally, travelling examiners and auditors could inspect provincial and local records.⁵⁵

Despite his realistic assessment of the need for central control of China's finances, Willoughby's plans for the implementation of a budget system were probably too optimistic. The specialist's traditionally low status in the imperial Chinese bureaucracy, the widespread corruption in Yuan's regime, and the existence of nearly autonomous dictatorships in many of China's provinces presented virtually insurmountable obstacles to the establishment of a properly administered budget.⁵⁶ Willoughby knew that the recruitment and training of an efficient staff of specialists would be very difficult, but he remained hopeful. If China's leadership seriously tackled reform, he wrote Westel, progress could be made towards an efficient administration of her affairs.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 2nd ed., p. 211; C. K. Yang, "Some Characteristics of Chinese Bureaucratic Behavior," p. 138.

⁵⁷W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Mar. 26, 1916, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

Willoughby was anxious to achieve in China a reform that he and other advocates of scientific management had not yet been able to accomplish in the United States. While he served on the Taft Commission, he recommended that the nation adopt a budget system, but Congress did not act on his recommendation until 1921. In later years, he regarded his role in the establishment of the Bureau of the Budget as the most significant achievement of his life.⁵⁸ His plan to implement a similar budget system in China is significant to the evaluation of his work there, for it reveals why Willoughby, from his arrival in Peking, stressed administrative reform over constitutional reform.

In Willoughby's mind, China faced several inter-related problems, and he took very seriously his responsibility as an adviser to help China overcome them. One problem for both China and the United States was the maintenance of China's integrity. To resist pressure from Japan or Russia, which wished to make substantial encroachments on her territory, China needed a strong government and financial solvency. To achieve a strong government capable of resisting both external pressure and internal disintegration, Yuan Shih-k'ai had to develop some link between the people and the central government in Peking. In short, both the maintenance of the Open

⁵⁸ Interview with William W. Willoughby, Bohun Farm, Mathews, Virginia, July 31, 1974.

Door and the development of self-government in China depended upon the maintenance of a stable government.

To achieve stability, Willoughby turned not to constitutional models but to American progressive ideas. For Willoughby, the administrator, the impartial expert in an efficient administrative system, was to provide the stability China needed. The administrative systems--particularly taxation, which touched every citizen--would provide the essential link between the people and the government, an avenue of communication and service. The stability provided by the civil service, working within well-organized government agencies, would provide an atmosphere suitable for the growth of republicanism and incidentally for American political, social, and economic influence. The administrator, armed with the techniques of scientific management, became the means of establishing a modern, efficient China.

By the spring of 1915, however, Willoughby had grown discouraged by China's inability to reorganize her government. He then had concluded that either China had to provide the experts to aid her transition to a modernized, western, republican nation or had to submit to "receivership." Yuan Shih-k'ai's acceptance of almost all of the Twenty-One Demands brought a break in the tension between Japan and China, and in June, Goodnow and Westel Willoughby were due to arrive in Peking. Although they were not always consistent with China's traditions, Willoughby's suggestions

had been well-received by some Chinese officials, who believed that his memoranda on fiscal reform would be a "great aid." But in late summer, Willoughby's attention would turn from reform to monarchy.⁵⁹

⁵⁹W. F. Willoughby to Westel, May 13, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING

In May, 1915, the Chinese government accepted most of the demands Japan had made, and for the moment the crisis between the two nations passed. Willoughby was convinced that little had been resolved between China and Japan that spring. To his sister Alice he wrote that Japan would continue "to push her claims further as the opportunity presents itself."¹ Nevertheless, tension had lessened as summer approached, and Willoughby was now preoccupied with the impending visit from Dr. Goodnow and his brother and close confidant, Westel.²

According to Goodnow's contract, he was to return to Peking at Yuan Shih-k'ai's request in the summer of 1915.³ When President Yuan had extended an invitation to return, Goodnow had accepted and arrived in Peking in July. Westel apparently had no specific duties but had come with Goodnow

¹William F. Willoughby to Alice, May 20, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary.

²W. F. Willoughby to Westel, May 27, 1915, ibid.

³See copy of W. F. Willoughby's contract with China's government, ibid., Box 1, Folder 2.

to visit his brother and see first-hand conditions in China. The situation could hardly be described as placid. Since the promulgation of the new presidential election law in January, signs had appeared in Peking that an attempt to restore the monarchy was imminent.⁴ Although Yuan proclaimed loyalty to the republic, and American Minister Paul Reinsch discounted the rumors, many foreigners in the Legation Quarter believed that the days of the republic were numbered.⁵

Soon after entering the rumor-filled capital, Goodnow turned his attention to the problems of China's constitutional development. Like Reinsch, Wilson, and the Willoughbys, Goodnow hoped that China would follow the American example, but he also recognized that she was not ready for either sweeping reform or republican government.⁶ Goodnow in particular contended that a nation could not simply adopt whatever form of government its leaders desired. The government had to reflect that nation's history and culture.⁷

⁴Jerome Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 1859-1916 (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1960), pp. 213-215.

⁵Ibid., p. 215. See also Paul S. Reinsch, An American Diplomat in China (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page, and Company, 1922), pp. 171-172.

⁶Jerry Israel, Progressivism and the Open Door (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971), p. 123.

⁷Noel Pugach, "Embarrassed Monarchist: Frank J. Goodnow and Constitutional Development in China, 1913-1916," Pacific Historical Review, 42 (Nov. 1973), 505-506. See also Reinsch, An American Diplomat, p. 46.

China, with its tradition of authoritarian rule, could not develop into a model republic without a transition period.

Because he believed that China was not ready to transform western political theory into a workable, stable government, Goodnow had not condemned Yuan's harsh treatment of the Kuomintang or his dissolution of the Chinese national assembly.⁸ Like Reinsch, W. W. Rockhill, and later Willoughby, Goodnow was convinced that China's greatest need was stability, and Yuan, even with tendencies towards absolutism, provided a measure of stability for China.⁹

However, Goodnow still kept sight of an eventual republican government for China. Far from extending Yuan's absolutism, Goodnow had tried in 1913-1914 to steer Yuan towards recognition of basic personal freedom, respect for his opposition and restoration of a legislature with limited power.¹⁰ The legislature was included in the May, 1914 provisional constitution, but Goodnow knew its inclusion was little more than window-dressing to achieve support from foreign nations.¹¹

⁸Pugach, "Embarrassed Monarchist," 507.

⁹Ibid., 510.

¹⁰Ibid., 507.

¹¹Ibid., 504, 509.

When Goodnow arrived in Peking, Yuan Shih-k'ai requested a memorandum discussing the relative merits of various types of governments for China. Although Goodnow had been pessimistic in 1914 about his chances for affecting meaningful change, he submitted the memorandum in August.¹² Normally such a memorandum would have caused little or no notice in the press, but this document gave Yuan Shih-k'ai and the supporters of the monarchy the legitimacy the movement needed to gain public attention and support.¹³

Goodnow began the memorandum with descriptions of the republican governments in the American and European states. The experiences of these nations, he wrote, proved that the most important condition for maintaining republican government--the stable succession to executive power--was best solved by a nation with a "high degree of intelligence," and a tradition of participatory government. In nations without such a tradition, failure to solve the problem of providing an orderly succession led frequently to anarchy, disorder, and dictatorship. Such disorder in China would surely lead to intervention by foreign powers, he warned, for disorder threatened the "economic interests of the European world."¹⁴

¹²Ibid., 510.

¹³Reinsch, An American Diplomat, p. 47.

¹⁴Goodnow memorandum, in United States Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1915 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1924), pp. 57-58.

China then faced great danger to her internal stability and national sovereignty if this "great problem of presidential succession" remained "unsolved." In light of the agitation for the reestablishment of the monarchy, Goodnow then drew a dangerous and puzzling conclusion to his discussion of republicanism:

It is of course not susceptible of doubt that a monarchy is better suited than a republic for China. China's history and traditions, her social and economic conditions, her relations with foreign powers all make probable that the country would develop that constitutional government which it must develop if it is to preserve its independence as a state more easily as a monarchy than as a republic.¹⁵

This conclusion was qualified by the assertion that the monarchy could be established if no opposition to it appeared and that change was unlikely to bring "any lasting benefit to China" unless it was clearly a constitutional monarchy with popular participation.¹⁶ These qualifications, however, were ignored by the Peace Planning Society, which Yuan's supporters formed to win support for the monarchy. It freely exploited both the memorandum and Goodnow's position as an adviser to prove that a monarchy was best for China.¹⁷ Goodnow's later protests than his memorandum had been misunderstood had little effect.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 57-58.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 58.

¹⁷Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, pp. 204-205.

Goodnow's purpose in writing this memorandum has never been made clear. Jerome Ch'en, in his biography of Yuan Shih-k'ai, has remarked that the reason why Goodnow made such a "naive" statement remains "a historical mystery."¹⁸ Paul Reinsch, the American minister, offered this explanation for the memorandum:

Advisers had been so generally treated as academic ornaments that Dr. Goodnow did not suspect that in this case the memorandum would be made the starting point and basis of positive action.¹⁹

There is certainly an element of truth in Reinsch's appraisal, for Goodnow probably did not realize that the Peace Planning Society was in fact using his genuine concern for China to win approval for its plans.²⁰

However, historian Noel Pugach recently has argued that Goodnow was not merely writing philosophically about government alternatives when he drafted the memorandum. During 1914, Goodnow feared that Yuan Shih-k'ai was moving towards autocracy, and this unease hastened his departure from China.²¹ Despite his fears of Yuan's intentions and his sincere desire for a Chinese republic, Goodnow also

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Reinsch, An American Diplomat, p. 173.

²⁰Ibid., p. 47.

²¹Pugach, "Embarrassed Monarchist," 513.

genuinely feared that Yuan's death would leave China in chaos. Consequently, he wrote the memorandum not blindly but in hope that a constitutional monarchy would give China the stability it needed for progress and reform.²²

Willoughby's correspondence gives support to Pugach's analysis. Willoughby had written his brother in January about the implications of the presidential election law and asked that this information be passed along to Goodnow. He also sent Westel both news clippings and his memorandum about the law.²³ When Goodnow arrived, Willoughby was ill with a respiratory ailment and had been out of contact with developments in Peking. Nevertheless, Goodnow knew of the monarchial sentiment. To Simon N. D. North of the Carnegie Endowment Willoughby wrote that Goodnow "heard the matter discussed as soon as he reached Peking." He had not consulted about the memorandum, Willoughby reported, and added that "it came as quite a surprise to me." He was convinced that Goodnow had not volunteered the statement but that Yuan Shih-k'ai had requested it. Like Reinsch, and Pugach, Willoughby believed that Goodnow's good intentions had been used by the monarchists. Goodnow did not instigate the monarchial movement, as it appeared, but the memorandum was "seized upon as an excuse for

²²Ibid., 512, 515-516.

²³W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Jan. 7, 27, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

launching the movement publicly."²⁴

When Willoughby returned to Peking from a September vacation, the plans for the establishment of the monarchy were well under way. While his supporters feverishly made plans for his enthronement, Yuan Shih-k'ai modestly declared that he would not accept the throne, perhaps as a ploy to sound out possible opposition to the move.²⁵ By October, plans had been made to call a "citizen's convention" to vote upon the change.²⁶ Even Chinese who wanted progress and reform under a constitutional government supported the monarchy, possibly out of fear or perhaps out of hope that the establishment of the monarchy would satisfy Yuan's ambitions and permit concentration on reform.²⁷

Not all Chinese welcomed the proposed change. As various pro-monarchy and republican factions in Peking competed for his support, Willoughby found himself in an uncomfortable position. Some Chinese officials, including the secretary of state, asked him to use his influence as an adviser to persuade Yuan to give up plans for the

²⁴W. F. Willoughby to Simon N. D. North, Jan. 4, 1916, *ibid.*, Box 5, Folder 36. See also W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Sept. 8, 1915, *ibid.*

²⁵New York Times, Aug. 25, 1915.

²⁶New York Times, Oct. 9, 1915.

²⁷Reinsch, An American Diplomat, pp. 176-177.

monarchy. At the same time, the minister of agriculture reported to Yuan that Willoughby favored the change. Willoughby cared little about palace intrigue, but he feared the reestablishment of the empire. To his brother he confided, "absolutism . . . is likely to be a feature of a monarchy if it is restored."²⁸ If the president asked for advice, Willoughby wrote, he did not intend to be used as Goodnow had been. He would try to persuade Yuan to move to the "right form" of government rather than "approve the change itself."²⁹

The memorandum Yuan soon requested on the change to monarchy was one of the shortest of Willoughby's papers. He deftly avoided placing his approval on the establishment of a monarchy and avoided altogether the vital question of whether monarchy was best for China. At this point, Willoughby argued, the form of government was not nearly as important as the need to establish a constitutional government. The commitment in 1912 to a republican form was not as significant as the decision to construct a government of law. This decision "constituted the really revolutionary feature of the change then effected." Law,

²⁸W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Sept. 18, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

²⁹W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Oct. 4, 1915, ibid. In this letter Willoughby wrote that Roy Anderson, an American close to many Chinese officials, favored the monarchy and might have induced Goodnow to write the memorandum.

not the "arbitrary will of the sovereign," gave legitimacy to China's government, and no discussion of the form of government should "obscure this fundamental fact."³⁰

Identifying constitutional government with progress, Willoughby warned against any appearance of absolutism. Because China was now committed to constitutional government, "great care should be taken that no backward step is made in this respect." To be sure, a monarchy could be a constitutional government, but constitutions were generally associated with republics. This association had occurred because monarchies were historically prone to absolutism. Consequently, Yuan's reestablishment of the monarchy would be understood both domestically and internationally as evidence of reaction, not progress, "a setback to constitutionalism, unless extreme precautions are taken to insure that this is in fact not the case." Yuan's decision to restore the monarchy, Willoughby concluded, would be judged by future generations on its ability to preserve China's commitment to modern constitutional government.³¹

At the same time that Willoughby expressed his commitment to a constitutional government, he recommended

³⁰W. F. Willoughby, "Some Observations on the Proposed Change of the Government of China from a Republic to that of a Monarchy," n.d., ibid., Box 5, Folder 42.

³¹Ibid.

that a national assembly be included in the permanent constitution to serve as a consultative and advisory body to the "chief executive." Willoughby again emphasized that the chief executive could not rely on autocratic power but needed to respond to public opinion and be held accountable for his actions. The national assembly was the device by which the chief executive could be held accountable. He would present all proposed laws to the assembly for discussion, and the assembly in turn represented China's "public opinion." Moreover, the chief executive had to give to the assembly "a full account of the manner in which the great powers vested in him" were "exercised."³² Thus, the national assembly had the power to assure that the actions of the chief executive conformed to the "desires of the people." As a further check, the publication and open discussion of the national budget required under Willoughby's plan insured that the chief executive was using his power wisely.³³

In his discussion of the budget, Willoughby explored again the problem of accountability. Government in China had to rest upon law, he argued. A chief executive could have "almost autocratic powers" as long as he exercised

³²W. F. Willoughby, "Memorandum on the Advisability of Providing in the Permanent Constitution that the National Assembly be an Advisory and Consultative Body Only," n.d., ibid.

³³Ibid.

them "in accordance with the procedures laid down in the constitution." If matters of state were left solely to China's assembly, the result would be "dissensions and disorder," leading to serious internal trouble. However, the discussion of a budget by the assembly provided a rational check over the chief executive's actions. His proposal was not perfect, Willoughby admitted, but it at least represented "an enormous step . . . away from a regime of pure autocracy" and laid a "basis for the progressive development of a government of public opinion as the political education of the people is achieved." More significantly, Willoughby concluded that the adoption of his proposal would secure these benefits without jeopardizing China's basic need for a strong central government to maintain stability.³⁴

Since Yuan's plans to increase his personal power through the monarchy seemed clear by the fall of 1915, Willoughby's proposals to check the actions of the "chief executive" through public opinion and the publication of a budget seem hopelessly naive. However, Willoughby was well aware of Yuan's ambitions and realized as well that the chance for constitutional, if not republican government, was fading in China. His memoranda represented an attempt to turn Yuan Shih-k'ai away from autocracy. If Yuan wanted

³⁴Ibid.

support for the monarchy, he certainly received little from Willoughby. The constant reminders that power was derived from a constitution and that Yuan had to be accountable to the people's representatives gave no stamp of approval to the exercise of imperial prerogatives. In giving advice on the proposed change, Willoughby walked a narrow line. On the one hand, he did not want to give the impression of supporting the monarchy; on the other hand, outright opposition would have closed his access to Yuan altogether.

Although there was some opposition to the monarchy in southern China, and although Japan and the Allies pressured China to postpone the change to a monarchy, the movement for its establishment continued through the fall. The motives for the Allies' opposition were not entirely clear. In the case of the Europeans, they feared perhaps that the change would cause unrest and endanger their concessions.³⁵ Indeed, Japan's opposition to the monarchy might well have been designed to incite rebellion within China, thus providing an excuse for intervention to "restore order" and extend her influence.³⁶ Willoughby, fearing that the Allies had allowed Japan a free hand in Asia while the

³⁵New York Times, Nov. 2, 1915.

³⁶Yim Kwan-ha, "Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Japanese," Journal of Asian Studies, 24 (November, 1964), 64; Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, pp. 215-217.

European war raged, wondered in a letter to Westel about Japan's "real motives" in opposing the reestablishment of the empire.³⁷ However, Yuan and his supporters, discounting the advice of Japan and the European powers, planned well. When the national conference was called to vote on the proposed change, all 1,993 delegates, using the same forty-five characters on their ballots, voted unanimously for the change and designated Yuan Shih-k'ai as the new emperor.³⁸

On December 11, 1915, the Council of State asked Yuan to accept the throne. After an initial modest refusal, Yuan accepted the offer, stating that he could not refuse the people's wishes.³⁹ Willoughby watched these moves with deep regret. Since he had submitted the memorandum on the proposed change, Yuan had not sent for him. In October he confessed to Westel, "I do not imagine that I will do much of importance for China during the remainder of my stay."⁴⁰ In December, soon after Yuan accepted the throne, he wrote:

³⁷W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Nov. 5, and Dec. 17, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

³⁸Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, p. 212.

³⁹New York Times, Dec. 12, 1915, and Dec. 16, 1915.

⁴⁰W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Oct. 20, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

I am inclined to think that Yuan will make it as absolute a gov't [sic] as he dares. I am by no means sanguine in respect to the ultimate result of the change.⁴¹

Thereafter Willoughby turned his attention to making arrangements for his return to the United States.

Official American reaction to the monarchy was muted. Although President Wilson, American Minister Reinsch, and Secretary of State Robert Lansing were skeptical of the change, they still believed that Yuan Shih-k'ai was the ruler who could best maintain order in China. Moreover, like Willoughby, they perceived Japan's opposition to the monarchy as an attempt to weaken China's internal stability. Consequently, when asked by other powers to oppose the monarchy, the United States refused. Instead, the government announced that the establishment of the monarchy was purely an internal matter and that China could choose her own government without foreign interference. China was not Mexico; and stability there was necessary to block Japanese encroachments on the Open Door. Since stability could possibly be achieved with the monarchy, Reinsch and Lansing recommended recognition of the change.⁴²

Outside diplomatic circles, American reaction was mixed. Willoughby wrote to Westel that the Carnegie

⁴¹W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Dec. 17, 1915, ibid.

⁴²Tien-yi Li, Woodrow Wilson's China Policy, 1913-1917 (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), pp. 149-153.

Endowment was displeased "with Goodnow's connection with the monarchist movement here."⁴³ Frederick Moore, a correspondent of the Associated Press and a friend of Willoughby, assured the readers of World's Work that Yuan was not "personally ambitious" but had been "persuaded by the men around him" to take the throne.⁴⁴ The Outlook argued that the form of government in China was not as important as its commitment to "social morality" and noted philosophically that "a republic in our radical sense of the word is hardly adapted to China's social system."⁴⁵ An editorial in the Independent, however, called Yuan's reestablishment of the monarchy a "gigantic crime," "the crowning act of . . . a long career of intrigue and treachery." Urging revolt against the regime, the Independent boldly summoned the United States "to the rescue of the Chinese people in their hour of distress."⁴⁶

Some Chinese needed little urging from the Independent to begin a revolution. In late December, Yunnan province declared itself independent of Yuan's rule, and Kweichow

⁴³W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Dec. 17, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

⁴⁴Frederick Moore, "Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Throne of China," World's Work, 31 (Feb. 1916), 373.

⁴⁵"China: Republic or Monarchy," Outlook, 111 (Sept. 1, 1915), 15.

⁴⁶"A Betrayal of the Republic," Independent 53 (Dec. 20, 1915), 457.

soon followed. Some provincial leaders were genuinely disgusted by the restoration of the monarchy, but others merely hoped to increase their personal power. Whatever the reasons for their revolt, Yuan had only limited success in crushing it, because support for his government had eroded in many areas of China.⁴⁷ Because of the revolts and the threat of Japanese intervention, Yuan postponed his coronation several times.⁴⁸ The December revolt had greatly strengthened the hand of Japanese officials who wanted to use internal disorder as an excuse for extending Japan's influence in China. By March, the Japanese were fully committed to the support of the rebels and the destruction of Yuan Shih-k'ai's regime.⁴⁹

Although Willoughby believed at first that Yuan could control the rebellion, he grew more pessimistic as the months passed. He wrote to Westel early in March, 1916, that there was "a possibility that the government will find itself unable to repress the rebellion." The personal loyalty of the Chinese officials once given to Yuan had weakened to the point that he was received as a "political appointment who has thought first of his own aggrandizement." Willoughby concluded:

⁴⁷Immanuel Hsu, The Rise of Modern China (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 570-571.

⁴⁸Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, pp. 227-228.

⁴⁹Yim Kwan-ha, "Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Japanese," 69-71.

. . . my work here is practically finished. Practically no call has been made for my services since I refrained from coming out in favor of a monarchy.⁵⁰

Soon after Kwangsi province declared itself independent on March, 15, 1916, Yuan Shih-k'ai's reign as emperor ended. The revolt's spread across China was certainly one cause of the monarchy's failure. Yuan had lost much of his personal control over the army while he served as president, and key military leaders had become opportunistic rather than loyal. As the army's loyalty shifted from Yuan to provincial military leaders, China's financial situation grew more unsteady, and Japanese pressure on China intensified. Yuan was forced to renounce the monarchy on March 22 and call for the establishment of a cabinet system of government.⁵¹

This action, however, did not end the turmoil in China. Convinced that Yuan had to leave office, rebellious elements continued the war against him. In April, Willoughby mused that Yuan was "so discredited" that he simply could not unite China under any system of government. The monarchy might have been carried through, he believed, had Yuan not shown his weakness in acquiescing to Japan's demands for delay.⁵²

⁵⁰W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Mar. 1, 1915, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

⁵¹Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, pp. 197-199; Yim Kwan-ha, "Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Japanese," 71-73.

⁵²W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Apr. 2, 1916, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

Willoughby continued to worry over Japan's designs upon China's independence, but he greeted the news of the renunciation of the monarchy with some relief. "A real effort," he hoped, "will now be made to secure a permanent constitution and also to effect some administrative change."⁵³ Indeed, even as he prepared to leave China, he found hopeful signs that progress would continue, despite the still-raging rebellion. He and Reinsch had formed a Chinese Political Science Association and were pleased with its initial success. Foreigners and Chinese participated in discussions and listened to lectures on current affairs at the association's meetings, and the association planned to publish a magazine. Both Reinsch and Willoughby hoped that the organization would provide both leaders and ideas for a progressive China.⁵⁴

Moreover, even in his last days, Willoughby met with a political council, composed of various government officials and the advisers from Great Britain and Japan, to discuss China's political and administrative problems. Although he admitted that the group had been established primarily to secure foreign and domestic support for a faltering regime, Willoughby believed that the organization

⁵³W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Mar. 26, 1916, ibid.

⁵⁴William F. Willoughby, "The Chinese Political Science Association," Nation, 102 (Feb. 17, 1916), 193; Reinsch, An American Diplomat, pp. 153-154.

"is apparently earnestly seeking to do something." As he finished his last letter from China, Willoughby hoped that the abandonment of the monarchy meant "a reaffirmation of the desire of the people for a republic and a constitution." There was, he believed, real hope that China could progress if left free of Japanese control.⁵⁵

Willoughby left China on April 19, 1916. His cautious optimism seemed unfounded. The government was barely functioning, and unrest in China did not cease for many years. He was succeeded in Peking, surprisingly, by his brother Westel, to whom he wrote a lengthy letter after his return from China. Willoughby predicted Yuan's departure as leader of China but added that the cabinet system Yuan had proposed as a sop to the revolutionaries was "all wrong" and "will lead to years of acute political disturbances and unrest." Returning to a familiar idea, he reiterated his firm belief that only a strong executive with a national assembly could provide China with stable government. China, he argued, had never settled the question of how much authority the central government should have, even though Yuan had in some instances dismantled the provincial governments through his system of military governors.⁵⁶

⁵⁵W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Apr. 2, 1916, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

⁵⁶W. F. Willoughby to Simon N. D. North, Apr. 19, 1916, ibid., Box 5, Folder 36.

Like Paul Reinsch, Willoughby believed that key reforms could be introduced to China on the provincial level. Writing to Westel, he urged that close attention be given to reform of provincial and local governments, the Chinese tax system, the constabulary, and the administrative system. Yuan Shih-k'ai could no longer hope to maintain a stable government for China, nor could the proposed cabinet system succeed where Yuan's personal government failed. Willoughby concluded, "I see no hope for China unless she is prepared to act in a radical way."⁵⁷

To Simon North of the Carnegie Endowment, Willoughby wrote again of the threat Japan posed to United States' interests in China, and urged that the United States "spare no pains" to interpret events there. As for Chinese integrity and independence, the future offered little promise:

. . . China will in all probabilities have to confront two alternatives: either she will enter upon a long period of political unrest, or she will have to suffer foreign intervention.⁵⁸

On Paul Reinsch's request, Willoughby set forth a proposal for direct foreign intervention in China to "establish a stable government based on modern principles."⁵⁹

⁵⁷W. F. Willoughby to Westel, Toronto, May 12, 1916, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35.

⁵⁸W. F. Willoughby to Simon N. D. North, Apr. 19, 1916, ibid., Box 5, Folder 36.

⁵⁹W. F. Willoughby to Paul S. Reinsch, Toronto, May 12, 1916, ibid., Box 5, Folder 37.

He proposed the creation of a commission similar to that employed by the United States in the Philippines to give the Chinese experience and training in government. But first, the participating nations would have to agree that they would control China only until such time that the Chinese could resume self-government. To be sure, the commission should set up some "representative" body to express Chinese opinion about the manner in which the government was run, but major organization would be left with foreign governments. Specifically, Willoughby recommended the establishment of a civil service system to train the Chinese for efficient administration, a code commission to revise all law, and a constabulary to enforce the law. In addition, foreign powers were to supervise reform of the existing revenue and court systems.⁶⁰

The United States had to take care that the major goal of the intervention was not obscured: the powers were to work only to educate the Chinese politically and put their government on a sound basis. The process, Willoughby noted, was similar to placing China under a "receivership":

. . . As in the case of all receiverships, it is the duty of the receiver to hasten in every way the date on which he can be discharged and the enterprise turned over to the stockholders.⁶¹

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

That Willoughby would compare China's situation with a bankrupt firm was significant, for the comparison revealed much about his hopes for China and his conception of the role of government in society. The corporation was often used by Willoughby and other progressives identified with the efficiency and scientific management movements as a model for the reorganization of government. The corporation used efficient planning and administration to handle complex business functions. If well-managed, it provided an excellent example of what professionals and experts could accomplish.

The letter to Reinsch marked the end of Willoughby's term as legal adviser. The time he spent in China was only eighteen months in a very full life. When he returned to the United States in the spring of 1916, he worked actively on preparedness, urging the adoption of efficient, scientific management techniques to win the war with the least possible cost in money and manpower. He also accepted the directorship of the Institute of Governmental Research, a part of the prestigious Brookings Institute, and worked with distinction for many years to promote sound government administration. While director of the Institute, he drafted and lobbied for a bill which created the Bureau of the Budget.⁶² His distinguished public career extended

⁶²For an interesting account of Willoughby's work at the Institute for Governmental Research, see Will P. Kennedy, "Silent Partner of Uncle Sam," Washington Star, Aug. 19, 1928, Willoughby Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.

two decades beyond his term as adviser to Yuan Shih-k'ai. Yuan's term was drawing to a close when Willoughby left Asia. Nearly stripped of power, Yuan died in June, 1916. At his death he did not leave a strong, stable China, but a country dominated by warlords.

EPILOGUE

When William F. Willoughby left Peking in the spring of 1916, China was no closer to the establishment of a stable government than when he arrived. Yuan Shih-k'ai was no longer capable of uniting the country, and the emergence of warlords exerted significant centrifugal force on Peking. The collapse of Yuan's monarchy left China in turmoil. Unfortunately, Willoughby's prediction of a long period of internal unrest was accurate.

The United States had originally supported Yuan Shih-k'ai because he seemed capable of establishing a stable government in China, and a stable China was essential to the maintenance of the Open Door. If China could control internal unrest and resist Russian and Japanese encroachments, American entrepreneurs could dispose of surplus manufactured goods and dominate the China market. Commercial penetration of China would enable the United States to preserve its own prosperity and expand its economic influence in Asia.

The primary American interest in China, then, was commercial, but many citizens wished to expand American cultural and political influence as well. In the wake of the 1911 Revolution, missionaries, educators, journalists, and political scientists went to China to promote the growth

of republican institutions and encourage her acceptance of western ideas. China's internal instability, financial weakness, and hesitancy in deciding upon a permanent constitution seemed to provide evidence of her need for advice from an older republic.

William Willoughby arrived in China with impressive experience in public administration. He had reorganized Puerto Rico's tax structure and her municipalities, introduced the techniques of scientific management to the Census Bureau, and served with distinction on the Taft Commission on Economy and Efficiency in Government. Like his predecessor Frank Goodnow and most Americans in China, he was convinced that China had to establish a stable government before she could adopt republican institutions. Instead of pressing first for constitutional reform, Willoughby proposed a progressive idea--the reorganization of China's administration. An efficient, well-trained civil service would curtail corruption and would protect the interests of all people. But more importantly, the expert--the tax collector, the constable, the accountant--would literally provide the epoxy to hold China together. The administrator would serve as an efficient channel of communication between the people and the leadership. When this link was established, truly republican institutions could be unveiled, first at the local level, then at the provincial level, and then at Peking. In short, Willoughby's proposed reforms reflected his identification with American

progressivism, and his goal--the establishment of a stable government--was completely consistent with the policy of the Open Door.

Willoughby faced a number of obstacles to the successful implementation of his proposals, and some of them he quickly recognized. He knew, for example, that Japan and Russia wished to extend their influence in China and that Japan would use China's domestic turmoil as an excuse for direct intervention. He also realized that China could not successfully control disorder unless she defined precisely the power of the central government over her provinces. Both his proposals for administrative reform and his promotion of an American loan were designed to meet these critical and interrelated problems. Unless Yuan Shih-k'ai could control China's provinces and establish a workable and financially solvent government, instability was likely to continue. Such instability precluded the establishment of republican institutions and offered Japan an opportunity to expand her influence in China.

Yuan Shih-k'ai's ambition and his concept of government posed yet another obstacle to reform. When Yuan promulgated the new presidential election law in December, 1914, Willoughby knew that the prospects for successful development of republican government were growing dim. Both the new law and Yuan's request for information on Diaz of Mexico demonstrated that he was moving towards

increasingly authoritarian rule, and during the rest of his term, Willoughby wrote his memoranda accordingly. In each of them, he tried to identify constitutional rule and administrative reform with Yuan's self-interest. Since Yuan was not predisposed towards republican government, Willoughby hoped that appeals to political expediency might result in progress for China.

Although Willoughby was aware of Yuan Shih-k'ai's ambition and distrust of republican government and recognized China's desperate need for a strong central government, he was probably not fully aware of the obstacles to reform posed by China's traditions. The Confucian bureaucracy respected the generalist, a scholar trained to follow and inculcate the teachings of the classics, and it prized gentleness, kindness, discretion, and wisdom in its officials. The specialist was merely an aide to the generalist, and his position possessed little prestige.¹ At the heart of a modern bureaucracy, however, was the expert, who was able to use his technical training to cope with the problems of an urban, industrial, and technologically advanced society. He was not supposed to exercise subjective judgment but was trained to act impersonally.

Willoughby's bureaucrat was not charged with the

¹C. K. Yang, "Some Characteristics of Chinese Bureaucratic Behavior," in Confucianism in Action, eds. David S. Nivison and Arthur F. Wright (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959), p. 138.

maintenance of a hierarchial social structure but with the promotion of "social efficiency," a harmonization of the interests of various--and supposedly equal--social, political, and economic groups. His expertise and independence enabled him to foil special interests in the interest of all the people. The Confucian scholar was also charged with the preservation of the harmony of society and the protection of the people, but in no sense did the Chinese peasant determine his best interests. Once the transition to republican government was complete, Willoughby's bureaucrat ultimately would have been accountable to the people, making decisions within the framework defined by their representatives.²

The bureaucrat, then, was not the protector of an established social order and authoritarian government but the vanguard of participatory democracy. Although he admitted that the recruitment and training of his specialists would be very difficult and that adoption of his plans required "radical" change in China, there is no indication in either his letters or memoranda that Willoughby fully appreciated the drastic departure from tradition that implementation of his proposals required. In fairness to Willoughby, however, it should be noted that many Chinese were convinced that the Confucian bureaucracy could not

²Samuel Haber, Efficiency and Uplift (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 101-103, 107.

cope with the demands of modernization and that China would have to adopt at least some features of a western civil service system.³

Willoughby's comparisons with Puerto Rico also suggest that he had only a superficial knowledge of China's traditions and culture. Although his participation in the reorganization of that island's government provided valuable experience, he was too quick to draw parallels between his successes there and the needs of China. Obviously, the size of the two countries, their cultures, and their populations differed significantly. The vastness of China alone made central control of her hinterland difficult. Moreover, Puerto Rico did not initiate reform, nor did she develop her own government institutions; the United States had imposed a government upon her. The success of that imposition is in question today. Eventually, of course, Willoughby despaired of the prospects for reform in China and concluded that foreign powers would have to reorganize her administration as the United States had done in Puerto Rico.

Even if Yuan Shih-k'ai had been receptive to Willoughby's proposals, it is doubtful that China's

³William F. Willoughby to Westel, May 12, 1916, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 35, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary; William T. DeBary, "Some Common Tendencies in Neo-Confucianism," in Confucianism in Action, eds. Nivison and Wright, p. 48.

leadership could have put them into effect. The military governors in the provinces had no intention of turning over their power--and their sources of revenue--to Willoughby's bureaucrats. Moreover, the prospects for eventual republican government were not strong. The support for a republic in China came from a relatively small number of Chinese intellectuals, and the citizenry was apathetic, neither willing nor able to participate in public affairs. With Yuan's support, republicanism might have won more advocates; but without support of the people, a republic could not have been successfully established in China.⁴

When he became frustrated by Yuan Shih-k'ai's autocratic rule, the incredible scope of China's problems, and his own ineffectiveness as an adviser, Willoughby turned to consideration of a "receivership." But this proposal, too, was unrealistic. Neither the United States nor the European powers had enough military power in the Far East to occupy and reorganize China. Even if other nations had agreed to help, as Willoughby proposed, reconciliation of the receivers' interests would have been impossible. Japan, for example, simply did not share the United States' desire for a strong, independent China. Lastly, nationalism was a potent force in China, and many

⁴Jerome Ch'en, Yuan Shih-k'ai, 2nd. ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 211.

Chinese resented European control of her salt and customs revenue.⁵ It is doubtful, then, that the Chinese would have peacefully accepted western control of her entire administrative system.

In Willoughby's desire for stability and progress for China, even at the cost of receivership, lay still another inherent problem. Although he thought of himself as an impartial expert, he was not. In his mind, the interests of China and the United States were identical, and he advised the Chinese accordingly. When Willoughby perceived that Japan's Twenty-One Demands presented a threat to both Chinese and American interests, he urged Yuan to establish close diplomatic and financial ties with the United States to thwart her ambitions. To be sure, Japan's desire to extend commercial and political influence in Manchuria, Shantung, and Mongolia were a threat to China's sovereignty, but Willoughby's recommendations would have expanded the American presence in China. Japan represented the "yellow peril," but American expansion promised only a positive influence on China's development.

Because Willoughby's goals for China were consistent with the goals of American foreign policy, one might reasonably conclude that Willoughby acted in accordance with

⁵John King Fairbank, The United States and China, 3rd. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 190.

instructions from the United States government. Certainly he urged Yuan Shih-k'ai to develop close relationships with both the American government and financial community. Only the United States, he wrote, had "a keen interest and sympathy" towards the establishment of a stable government, and he added that the United States was "a great political asset to China in the difficulties, internal and external, that confront her."⁶ When he explored the possibilities of a loan, he fully intended to use it not only as incentive for reform but as a means of extending American influence in China. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Willoughby acted as an agent of the United States in any formal sense. The coincidence of goals stemmed from Willoughby's belief that stability and the acceptance of American ideas promised progress for China.

The Willoughby Papers and State Department documents also give no indication that Willoughby either directly or indirectly influenced American policy in China. His proposal for a loan perhaps promised an impact on policy, but the loan never materialized. The United States never intervened either unilaterally or multilaterally to effect Willoughby's receivership, and the article on the Twenty-One Demands came to Goodnow too late to be of use in winning American support for China. Since Willoughby and

⁶W. F. Willoughby, "The War, Its Causes, and More Important Consequences Likely to Result From It," Nov. 1914, Willoughby Papers, Box 5, Folder 42.

Paul Reinsch were close friends, it is possible that he might have affected Reinsch's decisions. The two men met often for bridge and frequently travelled together. They both played a major role in the establishment of the Chinese Political Science Association, and both hoped that China could eventually adopt a republican government. If Willoughby's ideas influenced Reinsch or the American State Department, however, their impact remains hidden.

Willoughby's precise relationship with Dr. Frank J. Goodnow and the Carnegie Endowment also remains obscure. The Carnegie Endowment, of course, suggested his appointment to the Chinese, but the exact circumstances surrounding the appointment are still unknown. His relationship with Goodnow is even more puzzling. Although he was nominally Goodnow's deputy, Willoughby apparently worked independently of him, wrote to him only sporadically, and communicated directly with the Carnegie Endowment. The Willoughby Papers, however, do provide some new information on the mystery surrounding the Goodnow memorandum of August, 1915. Unfortunately, Willoughby wrote no letters to his brother Westel that summer because his brother was with him in China. Consequently, this valuable source on Peking affairs is not available. But the letters to Simon North and to Westel after his departure from Peking indicate that Goodnow was not a naive adviser. Although there is still no conclusive evidence of Goodnow's exact intentions,

one can reasonably agree with historian Noel Pugach that Goodnow valued stability in China above the existence of a nominal republic.

When Goodnow feared instability in China and faced frustration there, he gambled first on a strong presidency and then on a monarchy to achieve substantial reform and stable government. Willoughby instead chose a solution consistent with his background as a public administrator and a progressive, the adoption of administrative reform. In light of the available evidence, however, one can conclude that his efforts to influence China failed. He could neither persuade Yuan Shih-k'ai to effect major reform nor convince him of the value of republican government. It is possible that Willoughby's ideas encouraged the Chinese who were already interested in the establishment of a republican government or the application of the techniques of scientific management to government administration. But there is no evidence that the Chinese ever implemented his proposals. The obstacles to the adoption of western government and philosophy were too difficult to overcome.

What lessons, then, did Americans learn from Willoughby's experience? Like many Americans, he was convinced of the superiority of western ideas and institutions, and he believed China's progress depended upon her adoption of a western model for her development. That China would find her own solution to her problems probably never occurred

to him. His own failure to achieve significant reform indicated that the power of the United States to influence the development of China was limited. Good intentions notwithstanding, Americans must respect the right of other nations to develop their own institutions in accordance with their own history and culture, free from any form of ideological imperialism.

American attempts to bring western civilization to China continued long after Willoughby's departure, and those who followed him met with as little success. Barbara Tuchman, in Stilwell and the American Experience in China, drew a conclusion about American efforts to influence China's development in the 1940's which was as applicable to Willoughby and the Progressives as it was to the Americans a generation beyond them: "In the end, China went its own way as if the Americans had never come."

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